THE BOOKMAN

THE SINS OF BOOK REVIEWERS

By Henry Seidel Canby

Editor, The Literary Review

I HAVE known thousands of reviewers and liked most of them, except when they sneered at my friends or at me. Their profession, in which I have taken a humble share, has always seemed to me a useful, and sometimes a noble one; and their contribution to the civilizing of reading man, much greater than the credit they are given for it. We divide them invidiously into hack reviewers and critics, forgetting that a hack is just a reviewer overworked, and a critic a reviewer with leisure to perform real criticism. A good hack is more useful than a poor critic, and both belong to the same profession as surely as William Shakespeare and the author of a Broadway "show".

The trouble is that the business of reviewing has not been sufficiently recognized as a profession. Trades gain in power and recognition in proportion as their members sink individuality in the mass and form a union which stands as one man against the world. Professions are different. They rise by decentralization, and by specializing within the group. They gain distinction not only by the achievements of their individual members but by a curious splitting into sub-types of the species. Law and medicine are admirable examples. Every time they develop a new kind of specialist they gain in prestige and emolument.

A reviewer, however (unless he publishes a collected edition and becomes a critic), has so far remained in the eyes of the public just a reviewer. In fiction we have been told (by the reviewers) of romancers and realists, sociologists and ethicists, naturalists and symbolists, objectivists and psychologists. Are there no adjectives, no brevet titles of literary distinction for the men and women who have made it possible to talk intelligently about modern fiction without reading it?

My experience with reviewers has led me to classify them by temperament rather than by the theories they

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possess; and this is not so unscientific as it sounds, for theories usually spring from temperaments. No man whose eliminatory processes function perfectly ever is a pessimist, except under the compulsion of hard facts. No sluggish liver ever believes that joy of living is the prime quality to be sought in literary art. And by the same eternal principle, moody temperaments embrace one theory of criticism; cold, logical minds another. I identify my classes of reviewers by their habits, not their dogmas.

But in order to clear the ground let me make first a larger distinction, into mythical reviewers, bad but useful reviewers, bad and not useful reviewers, and good reviewers. Like the nineteenth century preacher I will dispose of the false, dwell upon the wicked, and end (briefly) with that heaven of literary criticism where all the authors are happy and all the reviewers excellent.

The reviewer I know best never, I profoundly believe, has existed, and I fear never will exist. He is the familiar figure of English novels—moderately young, a bachelor, with a just insufficient income in stocks. Oxford or Cambridge is his background, and his future is the death of a rich aunt or a handsome marriage. In the meantime, there is always a pile of books waiting in his chambers to be reviewed at "a guinea a page", when he has leisure, which is apparently only once or twice a week. The urban pastoral thus presented is one which Americans may well be envious of—*otium cum dignitate*. But I have never encountered this reviewer in London. I fear he exists only for the novelists, who created him in order to have a literary person with enough time on his hands to pursue the adventures required by the plot. Yet in so far as he is intended as a portrait of a critic, he stands as an ideal of the leisured view of books. There has been no leisured view of books in America since Thoreau, or Washington Irving. Even Poe was feverish. Our books are read on the subway, or after the theatre, and so I fear it is in London—in London as it is.

Coldly, palpably real is the next critic of my acquaintance, the academic reviewer. He does not write for the newspapers, for he despises them, and they are rather scornful of his style, which is usually lumbering, and his idea that 1921 is the proper time in which to review the books of 1920. But you will find him in the weeklies, and rampant in the technical journals.

The academic reviewer is besotted by facts, or their absence. The most precious part of the review to him is the last paragraph in which he points out misspellings, bad punctuation, and inaccuracies generally. Like a hound dog in a corn field, he never sees his books as a whole, but snouts and burrows along the trail he is following. If he knows the psychology of primitive man, primitive psychology he will find and criticize, even in a book on the making of gardens. If his specialty is French drama, French drama he will find, even in a footnote, and root it out and nuzzle it. I remember when a famous scholar devoted the whole of his review of a two volume *magnum opus* upon a great historical period, to the criticism of the text of a Latin hymn cited in a footnote! The academic reviewer (by which I do *not* mean the university reviewer, since many such are not academic in the bad sense which I am giving to the word) demands an index. His reviews usually end with, "There is no index", or, "There is an excellent in-

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dex". The reason is plain. The index is his sole guide to reviewing. If he finds his pet topics there he can hunt them down remorselessly. But if there is no index, he is cast adrift helpless, knowing neither where to begin nor where to end his review. I call him a bad reviewer, but useful, because, though incapable of estimating philosophies or creations of the imagination, he is our best guarantee that writers' facts are facts.

My acquaintance with the next bad, but occasionally useful, reviewer is less extensive, but, by the circumstances of the case, more intimate. I shall call him the ego-frisky reviewer. The term (which I am quite aware is a barbarous compound) I am led to invent in order to describe the phenomenon of a critic whose ego frisks merrily over the corpus of his book. He is not so modern a product as he himself believes. The vituperative critics of the Quarterlies and, earlier still, of Grub Street, used their enemies' books as a means of indulging their needs for self-expression. But it was wrath, jealousy, vindictiveness, or political enmity which they discharged while seated on the body of the foe; whereas the ego-friskish critic has no such bile in him.

He is in fact a product of the new advertising psychology, which says, "Be human" (by which is meant "be personal") "first of all." He regards his book (I know this, because he has often told me so) as a text merely, for a discourse which must entertain the reader. And his idea of entertainment is to write about himself, his tastes, his moods, his reactions. Either he praises the book for what it does to his ego, or damns it for what it did to his ego. You will never catch him between these extremes, for moderation is not his vice.

The ego-frisky reviewer is not what the biologist would call a pure form. He (or she) is usually a yellow journalist, adopting criticism as a kind of protective coloration. The highly personal critic, adventuring, or even frolicking among masterpieces, and recording his experiences, is the true type, and it is he that the ego-friskish imitate. Such a critic in the jovial person of Mr. Chesterton, or Professor Phelps, or Heywood Broun, contributes much to the vividness of our sense for books. But their imitators, although they sometimes enliven, more often devastate reviewing.

Alas, I am best acquainted among them all with the dull reviewer, who is neither good nor useful. The excellent books he has poisoned as though by opiates! The dull books he has made duller! No one has cause to love him unless it be the authors of weak books, who thank their dull critics for exposing them in reviews so tedious that no one discovers what the criticism is about.

The dull reviewer has two varieties: the stupid and the merely dull. It is the stupid reviewer who exasperates beyond patience the lover of good books. He is the man who gets a book wrong from the start, and then plods on after his own conception, which has no reference whatsoever to the author's. He is the man who takes irony seriously, misses the symbolism when there is any, and invariably guesses wrong as to the sources of the characters and the plot.

There are not many really stupid reviewers, for the most indolent editor cleans house occasionally, and the stupid are the first to go out the back door. But merely dull reviewers are as plentiful as fountain pens. The dull reviewer, like Chaucer's drunken man, knows where he wants to go but

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doesn't know how to get there. He (or she) has three favorite paths that lead nowhere, all equally devious.

The first is by interminable narrative. "When Hilda was blown into the arms of Harold Garth at the windy corner of the Woolworth building, neither guessed at what was to follow. Beginning with this amusing situation, the author of 'The Yellow Moon' develops a very interesting plot. Garth was the nephew of Miles Harrison, Mayor of New York. After graduating from Williams, etc. etc. etc." This is what he calls summarizing the plot.

Unfortunately, the art of summary is seldom mastered, and a bad summary is the dullest thing in the world. Yet even a bad summary of a novel or a book of essays is hard to do; so that when the dull reviewer has finished, his sweaty brow and numbed fingers persuade him that he has written a review. There is time for just a word of quasi-criticism: "This book would have been better if it had been shorter, and the plot is not always logical. Nevertheless, 'The Yellow Moon' holds interest throughout." And then, finis. This is botchery and sometimes butchery, not reviewing.

The dullest reviewers I have known, however, have been the long-winded ones. A book is talk about life, and therefore talk about a book is one remove more from the reality of experience. Talk about talk must be good talk, and it must be sparing of words. A concise style is nearly always an interesting style: even though it repel by crudity it will never be dull. But conciseness is not the quality I most often detect in reviewing. It is luxurious to be concise when one is writing at space rates; and it is always harder to say a thing briefly than at length, just as it is easier for a woman to hit a nail at the third stroke than at the first.

I once proposed a competition in a college class in English composition. Each student was to clip a column newspaper article of comment (not facts) and condense it to the limit of safety. Then editorials gave up their gaseous matter in clouds, chatty news stories boiled away to paragraphs, and articles shrank up to their headlines.

But the reviews suffered most. One, I remember, came down to "It is a bad book", or to express it algebraically, (It is a bad book)^3. Another disappeared entirely. On strict analysis it was discovered that the reviewer had said nothing not canceled out by something else. But most remained as a weak liquor of comment upon which floated a hard cake of undigested narrative. One student found a bit of closely reasoned criticism that argued from definite evidences to a concrete conclusion. It was irreducible; but this was a unique experience.

The long-winded are the dullest of dull reviewers, but the most pernicious are the wielders of clichés and platitudes. Is there somewhere a reviewer's manual, like the manual of correct social phrases which someone has recently published? I would believe it from the evidence of a hundred reviews in which the same phrases, differently arranged, are applied to fifty different books. I would believe it, except for the known capacity of man to borrow most of his thoughts and all of his phrases from his neighbor. I know too well that writers may operate like the Federal Reserve banks, except that in literature there is no limit to inflation. A thousand thousand may use "a novel of daring adventure", "a poem full of grace and beauty", or "shows the reaction of a

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thoughtful mind to the facts of the universe", without exhausting the supply. It is like the manufacture of paper money, and the effect on credit is precisely the same.

So much for the various types of reviewers who, however interesting they may be critically, cannot be called good. The good reviewers, let an uncharitable world say what it will, are, thank heaven! more numerous. Their divisions, temperamental and intellectual, present a curious picture of the difficulties and the rewards of this profession. Yet I cannot enter upon them here, and for good reasons.

The good reviewer is like the good teacher and the good preacher. He is not rare, but he is precious. He has qualities that almost escape analysis and therefore deserve more than a complimentary discussion. He must hold his book like a crystal ball in which he sees not only its proper essence in perfect clarity, but also his own mind mirrored. He must—... In other words, the good reviewer deserves an essay of his own. He is a genius in a minor art, which sometimes becomes major; a craftsman whose skill is often exceptional. I will not put him in the same apartment with reviewers who are arid, egoistic, or dull.

LIGHT LOVER

By Aline Kilmer

WHY don't you go back to the sea, my dear?
I am not one who would hold you;
The sea is the woman you really love,
So let hers be the arms that fold you.
Your bright blue eyes are a sailor's eyes,
Your hungry heart is a sailor's, too.
And I know each port that you pass through
Will give one lass both bonny and wise
Who has learned light love from a sailor's eyes.

If you ever go back to the sea, my dear,
I shall miss you—yes, can you doubt it?
But women have lived through worse than that
So why should we worry about it?
Take your restless heart to the restless sea—
Your light, light love to a lighter lass
Who will smile when you come and smile when you pass.
Here you can only trouble me.
Oh, I think you had better go back to sea!

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AN OUTLINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

By Donald Ogden Stewart

With Sketches by Herb Roth

CHAPTER V

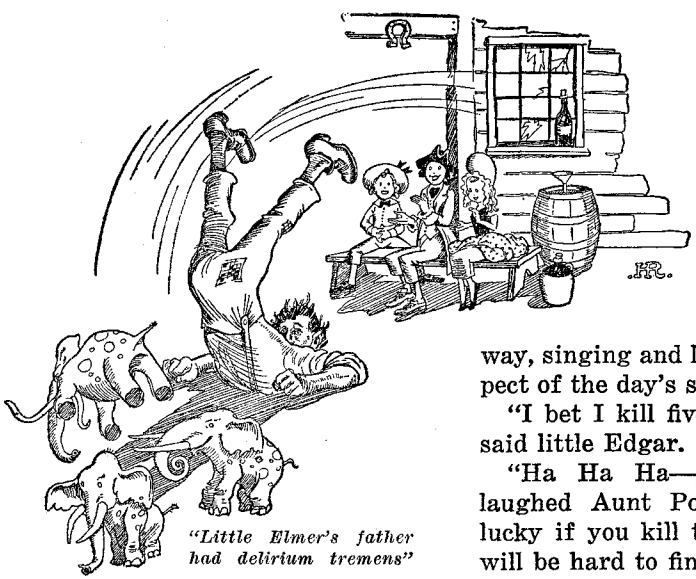
THE WHISKY REBELLION

In the Bedtime Story Manner of Thornton W. Burgess

"JUST the *day* for a Whisky Rebellion," said Aunt Polly and off she ran, lipperty-lipperty-lip, to get a few shooting rifles.

"Oh goody goody," cried little Emily. "Now we can all shoot at those horrid Revenue Officers." For the collectors of internal revenue were far from popular with these kindly Pennsylvania folk. And Aunt Polly Pinkwood had often promised the children that if they were good some day they would be allowed to take a shot at a Revenue Officer.

Soon she returned, bearing in her arms a number of bright shiny new guns. The children crowded around in glee and soon all were supplied with weapons except little Frank who of course was too young to use a gun and was given a two gallon jug of nice, old whisky to carry. Jed hitched up old Taylor, the faithful farm horse, and as quick as you could say Jack Robinson the little ones had piled into the old carryall. Round Mr. Sun was just peeping over the Purple Hills when the merry little party started on its way, singing and laughing at the prospect of the day's sport.



"Little Elmer's father had delirium tremens"

"I bet I kill five Revenue Officers," said little Edgar.

"Ha Ha Ha—you boaster, you," laughed Aunt Polly. "You will be lucky if you kill two, for I fear they will be hard to find today."

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"'Bang' went little Ellen's gun"

"Oh do you think so, Aunt Polly?" said little Elinor and she began to cry, for Elinor dearly loved to shoot.

"Hush dear," said Miss Pinkwood with a kindly pat, for she loved her little charges and it hurt her to see them unhappy. "I was only joking. And now children I will tell you a story."

"Oh goody goody," cried they all. "Tell us a true story."

"All right," said Aunt Polly. "I shall tell you a true story," and she began.

"Once there was a brave handsome man—"

"Mr. Welsbach," cried the children with one voice, for it was well known in the neighborhood that Aunt Polly had long been sweet on Julius Welsbach, the popular superintendent of the Sabbath School and the best whisky maker for miles around.

"Hush children," said Aunt Polly blushing in vexation. "Of course not. And if you interrupt me I shall not tell my story at all." But she was not really angry.

"And one day this brave handsome man was out making whisky and he had just sampled some when he looked up and what do you suppose he saw?"

"Snakes," cried little Elmer whose father had often had delirium tremens, greatly to the delight of his children.

"No, Elmer," said Miss Pinkwood, "not snakes."

"Pink lizards," cried little Esther, Elmer's sister.

"No," said Aunt Polly, with a hearty laugh, "he saw a—stranger. And what do you suppose the stranger had?"

"A snoot full," chorused the Schultz twins. "He was pie-eyed."

"No," replied Miss Pinkwood laughing merrily. "It was before noon. Guess again children. What did the stranger have?"

"Blind staggers," suggested little Faith whose mother had recently been adjudged insane.

"Come children," replied Aunt Polly. "You are not very wide awake this morning. The stranger had a gun. And when the brave handsome man offered the stranger a drink what do you suppose the stranger said?"

"I know," cried little Prudence eagerly. "He said, 'Why yes I don't care if I do.' That's what they all say."

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"No, Prudence," replied Miss Pinkwood. "The stranger refused a drink."

"Oh come now, Aunt Polly," chorused the boys and girls. "You said you were going to tell us a true story." And their little faces fell.

"Children," said Miss Polly, "the stranger refused the drink because he was a Revenue Officer. And he pointed his gun at the brave handsome man and said he would have to go to jail because he had not paid the tax on his whisky. And the brave handsome man would have had to have gone to jail, too; but fortunately his brother came up just at the right time and—"

"Shot the Revenuer dead," cried the children in glee.

"Yes children," said Miss Polly. "He shot the Revenue Officer dead."

"Oh goody goody," cried all. "Now tell us another story. Tell us about the time your father killed a Revenue Officer with an ax."

"Oh you don't want to hear that again, do you children?" said Aunt Polly.

"Oh yes—yes—please," they cried, and Aunt Polly was just going to begin when Jed the driver stopped his horses and said:

"This hilltop is as good a place to shoot from as I know of, Miss Pinkwood. You can see both roads, and nobody can see you."

"Thank you, Jed," said Aunt Polly giving him a kindly smile, and without more ado the children clambered out of the carryall and filled their guns with powder and bullets.

"I get first shot," proudly announced Robert, the oldest boy, and somewhat of a bully.

"Robert!" said Aunt Polly severely, and she looked almost ready to cry, for Aunt Polly had tried hard to teach the boys to be true knights of chivalry and it hurt her to have Robert wish to shoot a Revenue Officer before the girls had had a chance. Robert had not meant to hurt Aunt Polly's feelings but had only been thoughtless, and soon all was sunshine again as little Ellen the youngest made ready to fire the first shot.

The children waited patiently and soon they were rewarded by the sight of a Revenue Officer riding on horseback in the distant valley, as pretty a target as one could wish.

"Now do be careful, dear," whispered Miss Pinkwood, "for if you miss, he may take alarm and be off." But little Ellen did not miss. "Bang" went her gun and the little merry Breezes echoed back and forth, "She got him. She got him", and old Mother West Wind smiled down at the happy sport. Sure enough, when old Mr. Smoke had cleared away there was a nice dead Revenue Officer lying in the road. "Well done, Ellen," said Miss Pinkwood, patting her little charge affectionately which caused the happy girl to fairly coo with childish delight.

Mary had next shot and soon all were popping away in great glee. All the merry wood folk gathered near to watch the children at their sport. There was Johnny Chuck and Reddy Fox and Jimmy Skunk and Bobby Coon and oh everybody.

Soon round Mr. Sun was high in the Blue Sky and the children began to tire somewhat of their sport. "I'm as hungry as a bear," said little Dick. "I'm as hungry as two bears," said Emily. "Ha Ha Ha," laughed Miss Pinkwood. "I know what will fix that", and soon she had spread out a delicious repast.

"Now children," said Miss Pinkwood when all had washed their faces and hands, "while you were busy

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washing I prepared a surprise for you", and from a large jug, before their delighted gaze, she poured out—

"Aunt Polly had prepared delicious Bronx cocktails"

what do you think? "Bronxes," cried little Harriet. "Oh goody goody." And sure enough Aunt Polly had prepared a jug of delicious Bronx cocktails which all pronounced excellent.

And after that there were sandwiches and olives and pie and good three year old whisky, too.

"That's awfully smooth rye, Aunt Polly," said little Prudence smacking her two red lips. "I think I'll have another shot."

"No dear," said Miss Pinkwood, pleased by the compliment, but firm withal. "Not now. Perhaps on the way home, if there is any left", for Aunt Polly knew that too much alcohol in the middle of the day is bad for growing children, and she had seen many a promising child spoiled by over-indulgent parents.

After lunch those children who could stand helped Aunt Polly to clear away the dishes and then all went sound asleep, as is the custom in Pennsylvania.

When they awoke round Mr. Sun

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was just sinking behind the Purple Hills and so, after taking a few more scattered shots at Revenue Officers, they piled once more into the carryall and drove back to town. And as they passed Mrs. Oliphant's house (Aunt Polly's sister) Auntie Flo Oliphant came out on the porch and waved her handkerchief at the merry party.

"Let's give her a cheer," said Fred.

"Agreed," cried they all, and so twelve little throats united in three lusty "huzzahs" which made Auntie Flo very happy you may be sure.

And as they drove up before the Pinkwood's modest home twelve tired but happy children with one accord voted the Whisky Rebellion capital fun and Aunt Polly a brick.

NEWS NOTES OF PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

By Zona Gale

III

KILBOURN ROAD

IN June the road to Kilbourn is a long green hall,
A corridor of leafage, pillared white
By birches and with wild-rose patterns on the wall
And all melodious with the fluid fall
Or lift of red-winged blackbirds fluting mating cries.
The very air
Is visible, not by the light,
Not by the shades that drift
And dip, but by an essence rhythmic with the flood
That flows
Not in the sap, not in the blood,
But otherwhere.
And of that essence grows
All men see in the air of Paradise.

He lay upon a little upland slope
Deep, deep with grass.
And when I saw his head above the green
Where I must pass,
The battered hat, the squinting eyes
Blinking the westering sun, I felt a sting of fear—
Alas, that in June's delicate demesne

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A watching human face can teach one fear.
So then I spoke to him, gave him good day,
And seeing his gun said what I always say
Meeting a huntsman: Friend, I hope
You have killed nothing here.
He stared and grinned. And with his grin
I felt his trustiness. So, when
He scrambled down the bank and followed me,
I waited for him as my kind and kin.

He was a thing of seventeen. And men
Compounded in his blood had set him here
Wizened and humpbacked. But his little face
Held something of the one he was to be
In some eternity.
He talked as freely as a child. He'd shot, he said,
At a young woodchuck. Now his gun was broke.
I spoke
About a little kerchief made of lace
Lost on the road that day. He turned his head—
Did it have money in it, Lady?—with quick grace
Caught from some knightlier place.

And when I asked him what he read
He tried to rise to all my speech awoke:
A person give me a book a while ago.
O I donno
The name—the cover's off. I got, I guess,
Six pages done. Time the stock's fed
I get so sleepy I jump into bed.
...And with this for defense a rueful laugh.
I named the town, not two miles distant. No,
He hardly ever went there. Motion picture show?
His eyes lit. Several times he'd been.
War pictures was the best. He liked to kill?
He hung his head: No, but I never will
Shoot pups or kittens when they want me to.
War's different. ...School? He'd seen
Four years of that—well, four years, more or less.
Dad needed him—dad had so much to do.

So then I faced him and his need to live.
I put it plain: But you?
What do you want to do?
His answer lay within him ready-made.
He met my eyes with all he had to give:
I'd like, he said, to learn the artist trade.

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Questioned, he told me bit by little bit.
He'd had a horse that died—he'd painted her.
He'd painted Tige, the dog. The pigeon house.
The fence that crossed the slough. The willow tree.
Would he let me see?
Oh well—they wasn't much. He couldn't stir
The paint right and he didn't have enough.
All that he'd done was rough.
I tried to spell his dream, to see if his face lit
At flame of it.
He only said: Mebbe I couldn't learn.
And his eyes did not burn.
(Perhaps, I thought, there's nothing here at all.)
Dad's going to have me paint the house, he said.
I questioned where he led.
Yellow and brown, he answered. And my fancy's fall
He must have fathomed in my face, for a slow red
Mounted and swept his cheek. His eyes sought mine,
His look was piteous with a kind of light:
I don't like that. They picked it out, he said. I wanted white.
. . . And all his tone was shame.
The craftsman wounded in his craftsman's right
In ways he could not name.

He took the crossroad. Where I saw him go
Wild feverfew made narrow paths of snow
Through the flat fields of dying afternoon.
Bravely in tune
With every little part as with some whole
A redwing answered to an oriole
And met a catbird's call.
The sun! The sun! The road to Kilbourn like a long green hall!
The very air a spirit like our own
So nearly shown
That one could almost see.
The veil so thin that presence was outrayed.
But all the great blue day came facing me,
And crying from the vault and from the sod:
O God,
I'd like, he said, *to learn the artist trade.*

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IRISH POETRY

By Padraic Colum

With a Sketch by William Saphier

ONE of the characteristics of Irish poetry according to Thomas MacDonagh is a certain naïveté. "An Irish poet," he wrote, "if he be individual, if he be original, if he be national, speaks, almost stammers, in one of the two fresh languages of this country; in Irish (modern Irish, newly schooled by Europe), or in Anglo-Irish, English as we speak it in Ireland....Such an Irish poet can still express himself in the simplest terms of life and of the common furniture of life."[1]

Thomas MacDonagh is speaking here of the poetry that is being written today; of the poetry that comes out of a community still mainly agricultural, close to the soil, and with but few possessions. And yet with this naïveté there must go a great deal of subtility. "Like the Japanese," said Kuno Meyer, "the Celts were always quick to take an artistic hint; they avoid the obvious and the commonplace; the half said thing to them is dearest."[2] This is said of the poetry written in Ireland many hundred years ago, but the subtility that the critic credits the Celts with is still a racial heritage.

Irish poetry begins with a dedication—a dedication of the race to the land. The myth of the invasion tells that the first act of the invaders was the invoking of the land of Ireland—its hills, its rivers, its forests, its cataracts. Amergin, the first poet, pronounced the dedication from one of their ships, thereby dedicating the Milesian race to the mysterious land. Many poems since Amergin's time are dedications—dedications of the poet to the land, of the race to the land.

When the Milesian Celts drew in their ships they found, peopling the island, not a folk to be destroyed or mingled with, but a remote and ever-living race, the Tuatha De Danaan. Between the Milesians and the Tuatha De Danaan a truce was made with a partitioning of the country. To the Milesians went the upper surfaces and the accessible places, and to the De Danaan went the subterranean and the inaccessible places of the country. Thus, in Ireland, the Golden Race did not go down before the men of the Iron Race. They stayed to give glimpses of more lovely countries, more beautiful lovers, more passionate and adventurous lives to princes and peasants for more than a thousand years. And so an enchantment stayed in the furthest of European lands—an enchantment that gleams through the poems and stories of the ancient literature, and that has filtered into European literature through the lays of Marie de France; through the most memorable incidents in the Tristan and Iseult story; through the marvelous legend of the Grail, the germ

[1]Literature in Ireland. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

[2]Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry. E. P. Dutton and Co.

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of which came to French and German story-tellers from Ireland.

II

Anglo-Irish literature begins, as an English critic has observed, with Goldsmith and Sheridan humming some urban song as they stroll down an English laneway. That is, it begins chronologically that way. At the time when Goldsmith and Sheridan might be supposed to be strolling down English laneways, Ireland, for all but a fraction of the people, was an Irish-speaking country with a poetry that had had many centuries of cultivation. Afterward English speech began to make its way through the country, and an English-speaking audience became important for Ireland. At the end of the eighteenth century came Thomas Moore, a singer who knew little of the depth and intensity of the Gaelic consciousness, but who, through a fortunate association, was able to get into his songs a racial distinctiveness.

He was born in Dublin, the English-speaking capital, at a time when the Irish-speaking south of Ireland had still bards with academic training and tradition—the poets of Munster who were to write the last chapter of the unbroken literary history of Ireland. From the poets with the tradition, from the scholars bred in the native schools, Moore was not able to receive anything. But from those who conserved another part of the racial heritage, from the musicians, he was able to receive a good deal.

At the end of the eighteenth century the harpers who had been wandering through the country, playing the beautiful traditional music, had been gathered together in Belfast. The music that they were the custodians of had been noted down and published by Bunting. With Bunting's collection before them the Irish who had been educated in English ways and English thought were made to realize that they had a national heritage. Thomas Moore, a born song writer, began to write English words to this music. Again and again the distinctive rhythms of the music forced a distinctive rhythm upon his verse. Through using the mold of the music, Moore, without being conscious of what he was doing, reproduced again and again the rhythms and sometimes the structure of Gaelic verse. When Edgar Allan Poe read the lyric of Moore's that begins, "At the mid hour of night", he perceived a distinctive metrical achievement. The poem was written to an ancient Irish air, and its rhythm, like the rhythm of the song that begins, "Through grief and through danger", wavering and unemphatic, is distinctively Irish. Moore not only reproduced the rhythm of Gaelic poetry, but sometimes he reproduced even its metrical structure:

Silent, O Moyle, be the roar of thy water,
Break not, ye breezes, your chain of repose,
While murmuring mournfully, Lir's lonely daughter,
Tells to the night star her tale of woes.

Back in 1760 MacPherson's "Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland" was published. That medley, unreadable by us today, affected the literatures of England, France, Germany, and Italy. In the British Islands eager search was made for the Gaelic originals. There were no originals. MacPherson's compositions which he attributed to the Gaelic bard Ossian were in every sense of the word original. And yet, as the historian of Scottish Gaelic literature, Dr. Magnus MacLean, has said, the arrival of James MacPherson marked a great moment in the history

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Sketched by William Saphier

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

of all Celtic literatures. "It would seem as if he sounded the trumpet, and the graves of ancient manuscripts were opened, the books were read, and the dead were judged out of the things that were written in them." Those who knew anything of Gaelic literary tradition could not fail to respond to the universal curiosity aroused by the publication of MacPherson's compositions. In Ireland this led to the revelation of a fragment of the ancient poetry and romance. And now names out of the heroic cycles begin to come into Anglo-Irish poetry. "The words of this song were suggested by a very ancient Irish story called 'Deirdri, or the lamentable fate of the Sons of Usneach' which has been translated literally from the Gaelic by Mr. O'Flanagan, and upon which it appears that the 'Darthula' of MacPherson is founded," Thomas Moore writes in a note to the song "Avenging and bright fell the swift sword of Erin". Slowly fragments of this ancient literature were revealed and were taken as material for the new Irish poetry.[8]

After Moore there came another

[8]The Ossian of MacPherson (in Ireland Oisin, pronounced Usheen) was supposed to be the poet who had celebrated the lives and actions of the heroic companionship known as the Fianna. The Irish term for this class of poetry is "Fianaidheacht". At the time when "Ossian" was appealing to Goethe and Napoleon, the great mass of the poetry that was the canon of MacPherson's apocrypha was lying unnoted in the University of Louvain, brought over there by Irish students and scholars. Recently this poetry has been published by the Irish Texts Society (Dunaire Finn, the Book of the Poems of Finn, Edited and translated by Eoin MacNeill).

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poet who reached a distinctive metrical achievement through his study of the music that Bunting had published. This poet was Samuel Ferguson. He took the trouble to learn Irish, and when he translated the words of Irish folk songs to the music that they were sung to, he created, in half a dozen instances, poems that have a racial distinctiveness. Ferguson had what Moore had not—the ability to convey the Gaelic spirit. Take his "Cashel of Munster":

I'd wed you without herds, without money or rich array,
And I'd wed you on a dewy morn at day-dawn grey;
My bitter woe it is, love, that we are not far away
In Cashel town, though the bare deal board were our marriage bed this day.

Here is the wavering rhythm, the unemphatic word-arrangement, that is characteristic of Irish song. Callinan, too, gets the same effects in his translation of "The Outlaw of Loch Lene":

O many's the day I made good ale in the glen,
That came not from stream nor from malt like the brewing of men;
My bed was the ground, my roof the green wood above,
And all the wealth that I sought, one fair, kind glance from my love.

Ferguson's translation of "Cean Dubh Dilis" (Dear Dark Head) makes one of the most beautiful of Irish love songs; it is a poem that carries into English the Gaelic music and the Gaelic feeling; the translation, moreover, is more of a poem than is the original.

Sir Samuel Ferguson was the first Irish poet to attempt a retelling of any of the ancient sagas. He aimed at doing for "The Tain Bo Cuiligne", the Irish epic cycle, what Tennyson at the time was doing for the Arthurian cycle, presenting it, not as a continuous narrative, but as a series of poetic studies. The figures of the heroic cycle, however, were too primitive, too elemental, too full of their own sort of humor for Ferguson to take them on their own terms. He made them conform to Victorian rectitudes. And yet it has to be said that he blazed a trail in the trackless region of Celtic romance; the prelude to his studies, "The Tain Quest", written in a heady ballad metre, is quite a stirring poem, and his "Conairy" manages to convey a sense of vast and mysterious action. It was to Ferguson that W. B. Yeats turned when he began his deliberate task of creating a national literature for Ireland.

With Sir Samuel Ferguson there is associated a poet whom he long outlived, James Clarence Mangan. Mangan was a great rhapsodist if not a great poet. He was an original metrical artist, and it is possible that Edgar Allan Poe learned some metrical devices from him.[4] The themes that this poet seized on were not from Irish romance, but were from the history of the Irish overthrow. And what moved him to his greatest expression were the themes that had a terrible desolation or an unbounded exultation—Brian's palace overthrown and his dynasty cut off; the princes of the line of Conn dying unnoted in their exile; the heroic chief of the Clann Maguire fleeing unfriended through the storm; or else Dark Rosaleen with her "holy, delicate white hands" to whom all is offered in a rapture of dedication. Mangan incarnated in Anglo-Irish poetry the bardic spirit of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, and the sigh that Egan O'Rahilly breathed "A mo Thir, A mo Ghradh" (O my Land, O my love), is breathed through all his memorable poetry. He had the privilege of creating the most

[4]Mangan published in the Dublin University Magazine, a publication which Poe could have seen in various places. Compare Mangan's use of repetitions and internal rhymes with Poe's.

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lovely of all the feminine representations of Ireland, and in "Dark Rosaleen" he has made the greatest, because the most spiritual, patriotic poem in the world's literature. One has to describe the best of Mangan's poems as translations, although in doing so one is conscious of having to extend unduly the meaning of the word. For the impulse and the theme came to him through the work of another, and this not only in the case of the poetry that he took from Irish sources, but in the poetry that he drew from German and Arabic origins.

Mangan's poems were published in the 'forties. There was then a conscious literary movement in Ireland. It went with the European democratic movement, with the coming to consciousness of many of the European nationalities. At the time the Finns were collecting their Magic Songs that were to be woven into the enchanting epic of the Kalevala, and the Bohemians were making their first efforts to revive their distinctive culture. Among the minor European nationalities Ireland might have been thought to be in the best position to create a literature that would be at once national and modern, heroic and intellectual, for there was behind her an ancient cultivation and a varied literary production. Under the leadership of Thomas Davis a movement of criticism and scholarship was inaugurated—a movement that might have been expected to have fruit in a generation.

Then came the disaster of the famine—the double famine, for the famine of '47 followed on that of '46. The effect of this disaster (until 1914 no European people in two hundred years had suffered such a calamity) was a great rent in social life. How it affected everything that belonged to the imagination can be guessed at from a sentence written by George Petrie. He made a great collection of Irish music, but in the preface to his collection he laments that he entered the field too late. What impressed him most about the Ireland after the famine was, as he says, "the sudden silence of the fields". Before, no one could have walked a roadway without hearing music and song; now there was cessation, and this meant a break in the whole tradition. What Petrie noted with regard to music was true for poetry and saga. The song perished with the tune. The older generation who were the custodians of the tradition, were the first to go down to the famine graves. And in the years that followed the collapse the people had little heart for the remembering of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago". The history of Ireland since is a record of recovery and relapse from an attack that almost meant the death of the race.

III

That Ireland stirs so powerfully today means that a recovery has been made. There is a national resurgence, and as part of that resurgence there has come that literary movement, beginning in the 'eighties, which is generally termed the Irish Literary Renaissance. There are three writers who have each contributed a distinctive idea to this literary movement—W. B. Yeats, George W. Russell ("A. E."), and Douglas Hyde. The idea that Mr. Yeats has contributed is that of a culture that would be personal and aristocratic. Irish poetry, when he began his work, was in close alliance with political journalism. The Irish political movement had become parliamentary and argumentative, and this spirit had influenced the work of the

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poets. Irish poetry, with some notable exceptions, was poor in form and impersonal in mood. Mr. Yeats, by devoting his artistic energy to the creation of subtle and beautiful forms, brought a creative idea to the younger writers. He preached to them continuously on the discipline of form. In his early volume "The Wanderings of Oisin" he opened up a fresh world for the poets of the new time. And soon he was able to convince them that they were most racial, most Gaelic, when they were disciplining themselves for the creation of exact forms. Gaelic poetry, as it was easy to show, had ever for its ideal the creation of highly wrought forms.

He insisted that personality was the root of poetry, and that the expression of opinion and of collective feeling was for the journalists and the political orators. Mr. Yeats is regarded as a mystical poet: he is not mystical, however, but intellectual, and the poems in "The Wind Among the Reeds" that have given him a reputation for being a mystic, are esoteric rather than mystical; they belong to the same movement that produced the French symbolists. The Irish mind is intellectual rather than mystical, but it is very prone to take an interest in what is remote, esoteric, and cryptic. Mr. Yeats, in Irish letters, has distinctly stood for the intellectual attitude.

But the poet who had been his comrade in the Art School in Dublin was really a mystic. This was George W. Russell who was to publish his poems under the initials "A. E." Like all mystics "A. E." is content to express a single idea, and when one has entered into the mood of one of his poems one can understand the whole of his poetry. In his three books of verse, and in his book on national economics, "A. E." has stated his single, all-sufficing thought. Men are the strayed Heaven-dwellers. They are involved in matter now, but in matter they are creating a new empire for the spirit. This doctrine, which might form the basis for a universal religion, has been put into an Irish frame by the poet. "A. E." too has been drawn to the study of the remains of Celtic civilization. He sees in Celtic mythology a fragment of the cosmology once held by the Indians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks. And he alludes to Celtic divinities as if Lugh, Angus, Manannan, Dagda, Dana were as well known as Apollo, Eros, Oceanus, Zeus, Hera.

"A. E.'s" vision is not for all Irish writers who have come under his influence. But he has taught every one of them to look to the spiritual significance of the fact or the event that he writes about. Like the other two representative writers, W. B. Yeats and Douglas Hyde, "A. E." takes a large part in the public life of Ireland. He deals with the most practical of all affairs—agriculture, and he is one of the leaders of the movement for agricultural cooperation. He edits an agricultural journal, and he writes every week on economics and agriculture.

Dr. Douglas Hyde has written in Gaelic and in English; he has written poems, plays, and essays, but it is by his collections of folk poetry that he has most influenced contemporary Irish poetry. He came into contact with the Gaelic tradition by living with the farmers and fishers of the west of Ireland. The Gaelic-speaking population of Ireland had now shrunk to some remote and poverty-stricken districts along the Atlantic Ocean. But in them this poet-scholar was able to make a considerable gleaning. He

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has published "The Love Songs of Connacht" and "The Religious Songs of Connacht", two sections of a great collection he has made, and the publication of these songs has been one of the greatest influences on the new Irish literature.[5]

Dr. Hyde, in translating these Gaelic folk songs into English, reproduced in many instances the distinctive metrical effects of Gaelic poetry, and showed how various interesting forms might be adopted by Irish poets in using the English language. But the collections were to have an influence over more than language and metrical form. The young Irish poets who had been brought up in a culture remote from their racial inheritance, were to find in these poems not only the racial spirit, but the character of their people and the distinctive features of their country; they were to find in them too an intensity and a moving simplicity—"The Love Songs of Connacht" became the breviary of many of the younger poets.

The attempt at the re-Gaelicizing of Ireland by the Gaelic League has had a powerful effect on Irish poetry. Padraic Pearse, one of the truest poets that Ireland has ever produced, wrote his poems in Gaelic, bringing a new material into Gaelic poetry. And the kernel of Thomas MacDonagh's book of creative criticism, "Literature in Ireland", is in this declaration:

> The Gaelic revival has given to some of us a new arrogance. I am a Gael and I know no cause but of pride in that. *Gaedhal me agus no h-eol dom gur nair dom e.* My race has survived the wiles of the foreigner here. It has refused to yield even to defeat, and emerges strong to-day, full of hope and of love, with new strength in its arms to work its new destiny, with a new song on its lips and the word of the new language, which is the ancient language, still calling from age to age.

IV

Whether it has or has not to do with the prosaic issue of self-determination, it is certain that Irish poetry in these latter days is becoming more and not less national. But it is no longer national in the deliberate way that Thomas Davis would have it national, as "condensed and gem-like history".[6]

No, Irish poetry is no longer national in the deliberate or in the claimant way. But it is becoming national as the Irish landscape is national, as the tone and gesture of the Irish peasant is national. It is national in "A. E.'s" poetry—if not in those mystical reveries that transcend race and nationality, then in those impassioned statements in which he celebrates or rebukes the actions of some group or some individual; it is national in W. B. Yeats's poetry, in his range from invective to the poetry of ideal love; it is national in the landscape that Joseph Campbell evokes; in the bardic exuberance of language that James Stephens turns into poetry; in the delicate rhythms of Seumas O'Sullivan's lyrics and in the remoteness that they hold; in the hedgerows and the little fields that Francis Ledwidge's poetry images; in the dedication that is in Joseph Plunkett's, and in the high and happy adventurousness that is in Thomas MacDonagh's poetry.

[5] The influence has been exerted not only on poetry, but on the dialogue of the Irish drama as well. In making literal prose renderings of some of the songs he used the idiom and rhythm of the Irish peasant speaking English. Lady Gregory made use of the idiom in her versions of the old romances. Mr. Yeats praised Dr. Hyde's discovery and spoke of it to John M. Synge. Synge's rhythmic and colored idiom is very close to Dr. Hyde's prose versions of the Connacht songs. Here is a verse from one of them: "If you were to see the Star of Knowledge and she coming in the mouth of the road, you would say that it was a jewel at a distance from you, who would disperse fog and enchantment; her countenance red like the roses, and her eye like the dew of the harvest; her thin little mouth very pretty, and her neck of the color of lime."

[6] "National poetry...binds us to the land by its condensed and gem-like history. It...fires us in action, prompts our invention, sheds a grace beyond the power of luxury round our homes, it is the recognized envoy of our minds among all mankind, and to all time."

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GEORGE ADE

By Thomas L. Masson

With a Sketch by Ivan Opffer

IN the introduction to "Ivanhoe" Sir Walter Scott, with the genial candor that was one of his most charming traits, laments that hitherto he has been unable to break away from the uninterrupted course of the Waverley novels. "It was plain, however," says Sir Walter, "that the frequent publication must finally wear out the public favor, unless some mode could be devised to give an appearance of novelty to subsequent productions. Scottish manners, Scottish dialect, and Scottish characters of note, being those with which the author was most intimately and familiarly acquainted, were the groundwork upon which he had hitherto relied for giving effect to his narrative." He then adds: "Nothing can be more dangerous for the fame of a professor of the fine arts than to permit (if he can possibly prevent it) the character of a mannerist to be attached to him, or that he should be supposed capable of success only in a particular and limited style." Indeed, Sir Walter was so much impressed by the truth of his observation, that he insisted upon publishing "Ivanhoe" anonymously, and it was only upon the assurance of its success from his publishers that he consented to the use of his name.

This danger has long been recognized by authors, and during the last half century—inspired quite possibly by the example of Sir Walter—British writers have quite largely succeeded in overcoming the handicap. We have Mr. Kipling starting out as a writer of short sketches from India, creating a new vein of Anglo-Indian literature; but shortly breaking away from his environment and becoming a short story writer of universal appeal, a first-rank novelist, and the only poet who has voiced in rugged song the heart and soul of Imperial England. We have Jerome K. Jerome whose "Three Men in a Boat" and whose housemaid's knee fastened upon him the reputation of a professional humorist, suddenly turning into a dramatist of high order. There was Thackeray of "Punch", likewise a professional humorist and satirist, breaking bounds and becoming the author of "Vanity Fair"; and after him Du Maurier, who used to write his own jokes to his own drawings and who, leaving the conference table (they say in a fit of pique) built forthwith his "Trilby", surely a work of real literary art. Still more recently we have A. A. Milne, in the beginning a chance contributor to "Punch", rapidly achieving a reputation not only as a humorist and dramatist of the first rank, but as a writer whose breadth of vision is constantly increasing. There are numerous other examples in Great Britain of authors who have risen above their first reputations. Mr. Wells is a notable instance, for it would be difficult to say whether he is most preeminent as a

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novelist, an historian, or a sociological psychologist; and whether Thomas Hardy is greater as a poet or a novelist is a question upon which his staunchest adherents are divided.

The literature of this country is, quite inevitably, built upon smaller lines than that of Great Britain; but the same struggle of our authors to rise above their first limitations has been going on here, as there. With less success. Mark Twain made the attempt in "Joan of Arc" which he published anonymously because he feared that his reputation as a humorist would detract from the dignity of his effort. The problem appears to be more difficult in America than elsewhere.

All things considered, by right of achievement and what one may term "intrinsic merit", our two leading humorists are George Ade and Finley Peter Dunne; yet neither of them has fully succeeded in breaking away from his single reputation. Mr. Dunne became widely known as the author of the inimitable Mr. Dooley: and henceforth nothing but the observations of Mr. Dooley would satisfy an eager public. Mr. Ade became known as the author of "Fables in Slang", and Mr. Ade is still known as the author of "Fables in Slang", although it must be said that as the creator of the comic opera "The Sultan of Sulu", "The College Widow", and other productions almost equally meritorious, his fame as a dramatist is closely allied to his fame as a fablist. Yet here the observation may be made, let me hope without offense, that if Æsop had not written his fables, it is probable that George Ade's reputation as an American humorist would have been none the less; but his reputation as a dramatist might easily have been less if Gilbert and Sullivan's operas had not been written.

George Ade's fables are American fables. The form, granted, is very old, like hexameter verse or the ballade or the sonnet. But the form in this instance does not particularly matter. The point is that Ade is an American, which—in an American—gives one a great advantage. Ade was born in the middle of America: not exactly in the middle but enough to insure his being an American. He wasn't born near enough to the Atlantic coast to become an Anglomaniac, nor to take on too much eastern education to obscure his racial traits. It is probable that the mud of Indiana stuck to him long enough to charm him against foreign influences. Along somewhere in the middle of his life, after he had achieved fame, he traveled abroad: he went to Egypt. But it was then too late to spoil the quality of his jokes; their tang had become fixed.

George Ade, born in Kentland, Indiana, February 9, 1866, was educated at Purdue University. It probably did him less harm than anywhere else he might have gone. He succeeded in preserving his Americanism: he stuck to Indiana more or less, and learned to write at first in a very practical school —a Lafayette, Indiana newspaper office. Then, still an American, he flew to Chicago, and doubtless consorted with low spirits and plied his trade as a reporter and writer and served his apprenticeship. This leads me to observe that there would be nothing the matter with American literature if it were only permitted to grow up. If a man has native talent—a gift—he needs to have it protected from foreign influences long enough for it to stand upon its own legs! Otherwise it is crowded out and becomes merely

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an echo. That is so often the trouble with our most energetic writers.

George Ade practised on his slang for a long time. It was something that came out of the American middle west soil, and to which he gave his genius, molding it to his purpose and producing things that as finished products could scarcely have been produced anywhere else. That is what constitutes his merit, his claim to be an American humorist of the first rank.

Of course, no writer can produce things like that without having qualities. Theodore Dreiser, for example, is in my opinion a great novelist—another American—but when Mr. Dreiser writes essays slamming his own country (its vulgarity, its crudeness, its banality, etc.), he charms me not nearly—no, not fractionally so much as Mr. Ade, who arrives at the same result (and so much more effectively) in his fables. Sinclair Lewis in "Main Street" has written a long novel to prove that the people who live on Main Street are drab and uninteresting—at least so I am told by those who have read it. Personally I do not care for Mr. Lewis's opinion of the people who live on Main Street, because I sense his book as an echo; and besides, George Ade supplies me with what I wish to know about these Main Streets. He has them all down: he hits them off: and he doesn't waste a lot of time over them either.

At this point it is perhaps as well to make a pertinent observation about humor. You may put it down here, as a mental note, that the right kind of humor is always in sympathy with the people it "takes off". George Ade does not hate the people he writes his fables about. He doesn't stand off and fire poisoned arrows into them and snarl at them, and hold them up to ridicule by showing you how much he resents them. He doesn't resent them. He doesn't even go so far as to tolerate them. He likes them. He is one of them himself. They are his crowd. George Ade, born in Indiana, went to Chicago and learned the mechanics of his art. He went to Egypt, and looked it over, and left it where it was; came back to Indiana, bought a farm there, and lives there. In other words, George Ade is a plain American, a man of genius, living among his own people, putting on no frills. If you wish information about what has really been going on in America since, say 1900, get his fables and read them; you will come nearer to the truth there than in all the books on sociology and history that have been written during this period.

Personally, I haven't read Ade's fable of the two Mandolin Players for some years: but I know precisely what kind of bird the Players are, and I like to think about them. He did not make me hate or despise them —he only made me laugh at them. There are certain things inside of me that are just like the things inside of those two Mandolin Players of Ade's. I know they are there because I have been reminded of them: and I know there are also other things in various people of Ade's fables that are like the other things I have inside of me. Somehow I am not so ashamed of them as I was before I read the fables, because they have made me feel that we are all of us, east and west and north and south, a great deal alike: made up of about the same parts, in various combinations.

George Ade's reputation as a first-class American humorist (admitted it is along a certain narrow line) is firmly established, not essentially because he is a member of the National

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Institute of Arts and Letters, but because he has sounded a genuine American note in a manner of his own. The real trouble with the majority of people who read him is that they don't take him seriously enough: that is, they don't study him; they don't realize, as I have already hinted, that if you want real information about America, real insight into American character, snapshots at the American animal in his haunts, so to speak, here is where to get it.

You are doubtless fooled because the fable is short, because it is offhand and slangy, and because it isn't always so funny as it might be. All that comes from a mistaken idea about the nature and quality of humor. Some people should never attempt to read anything humorous. It cannot possibly do them any good: it only makes them worse. It is amazing indeed to see how little attention is paid to understanding the reading of humor in our public schools. I venture the assertion that a really good piece of literary prose humor or humorous verse —a classic if you will—would meet with scarcely any appreciation by an average class of high school students. I know this because I have tried it.

It has been my experience that George Ade's fables are hard to read aloud to a group of average people (if there be such a thing). The reason is perfectly plain. These fables are high literary art, but not dramatic art, because the impact of the slang word is often just too late to produce the instantaneous effect necessary to the listener. This of course is not always so; but it is so often enough to make the reading of these fables anything but a certainty. Occasionally a clear-cut phrase will go home with telling effect, but generally speaking Ade's fables need to be lingered over in silence: they are concentrated food, to be taken as a tonic, say one or two after a meal. It is quite natural also that they should not all be good or that some of them should be better than others. But in this respect, be not deceived. Your personal experience means much: you are sure to respond more to those things which reveal your own experience: so that if a certain fable appears to fall flat, it may easily be because that part of life has not particularly touched you.

They are in quite a large sense allegorical. You have to rise to the bait yourself. This is the beginning of one of Ade's fables:

> Once there was an Indian who had a Way of putting on all his Feathers and breaking out of the Reservation.

Think of reading that aloud to a committee of eight or ten—say a Board of Education or a Board of Health. You would have to explain at once that Ade in reality was not talking about an Indian at all: that he might indeed be talking about the chairman of the committee himself. You would then have to make a personal appeal to the chairman, and ask him if he ever felt like an Indian, felt like putting on his store clothes, and sneaking out of the side door for the purpose of raising cain. By this time you would be engaged in a controversy —which proves certain things which those who understand will already know, and those who do not understand can never be taught.

George Ade unites with the late Henry James the distinction of having achieved literary fame without benefit of clergy: that is to say without matrimonial aid. This is the only respect however in which they appear to have anything in common. Henry James scorned his native land—George Ade revels in his Indiana farm. Henry

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James took himself seriously and wrote in a language that few understand. George Ade snapped his countrymen, living among them, doing them good by his presence. His slang is almost wholly his own: you see plainly where he gets it from: but he rolls it a little and fits it in and changes it to suit his plan. It is impossible to overestimate the unconscious effect of a George Ade upon a generation: a combination of naturalness, common sense, sympathy, raillery, tolerance. This word caricature, which gives us flashes of ourselves, as a corrective, is an asset for genuine democracy much more powerful than we have any idea of. The kind of humor which reflects American traits, which is rough in spots, dull in spots, but true in its essence and untainted by foreign influences—that is extremely valuable to us as a people: highly sanitary and educational. This kind of raillery, of frankness, displayed in our train of humorists—Josh Billings, Artemus Ward, Mark Twain, George Ade, and other natives—came out of the original town meeting, a by-product of the process of self-government. It has helped to make of the American people—climatically nervous and daring—one of the most patient and tolerant peoples in the world. Our characteristic bluster and brag, the aftermath of the conquering of a new continent, plus the rawness and vulgarity that jar upon Dreiser so much—all this in its full uninterrupted swing doubtless is offensive; but a rough sense of humor—the capacity, so to speak, to "josh" oneself—has given us something as a corrective which will be a large help as we grow up into more "cultured" ways. Besides, I am not so sure that this America of ours is so crude a thing as the critics would have. Art is not confined to any medium. In new forms it is misunderstood in the beginning, and it is quite possible that in a larger sense there is an art to the living of a national life by a whole people far beyond any particular form of art. The Greeks developed the highest sense of art in architecture, sculpture, philosophy, drama, but they broke down in the art of preserving themselves. It is possible that America is developing a soul—something hitherto thought superfluous in a Christian people.

It remains only to answer the question, why is it that American writers, and particularly American humorists, move along such restricted lines—never get beyond a certain point—in contrast with their British prototypes? Alexis de Tocqueville, a most acute observer, who wrote when this country was first forming, has declared that in a democracy the same attention cannot be paid to letters as in an aristocracy:

> Most of those who have some tinge of belles-lettres are either engaged in politics or in a profession which only allows them to taste occasionally and by stealth the pleasures of the mind....They prefer books which may be easily procured, quickly read, and which require no learned researches to be understood...above all, they must have what is new and unexpected.

In short, the American audience is too heterogeneous, too mixed and scattered, too much occupied with material excitements. St. John Ervine, a more recent observer, attributes our lack of literature to the so-called process of standardization:

> Standardization means the destruction of individual preferences...it is not difficult to prophesy that the outcome of it will be sterility of the soul...a great literature cannot flourish in an atmosphere of imitation and suppressed personality, and unless America can somehow solve this problem of making a man's individuality grow and become vivid, there is slight

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likelihood of her making credit for herself with an art or a literature to which the world will yield respect.

From this standpoint, if you will, the fault lies not with the individual himself, but in the nature of things. In the case of George Ade, it is not his fault, but that of the audience, and the audience is the country. Here is a writer of undoubted native genius, a national humorist who achieves celebrity as the author of "Fables in Slang" and there stops. In the midst of a world upheaval, and a silent revolution in our own country that is producing astonishing changes in our body politic, we ask ourselves why no great writer arises, why no great satirist holds over us the whip of scorn, why it is that with so much material for the universal humorists, there is no universal humorist. The answer is that we don't want him. We have no time to listen to him. And unless we cultivate ourselves to feel the need of him, he will not grow up out of us.

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HIPPOLYTUS TEMPORIZES

By H. D.

I WORSHIP the greatest first—
(it were sweet, the couch,
the brighter ripple of cloth
over the dipped fleece;
the thought: her bones
under the flesh are white
as when sand along a beach
covers but keeps the print
of the crescent shapes beneath.
I thought: so her body lies
between cloth and fleece.)

I worship first, the great—
(ah sweet, your eyes—
what God, invoked in Crete,
gave them the gift to part
as the Sidonian myrtle-flower,
suddenly wide and swart;
then swiftly,
the eyelids having provoked our hearts—
as suddenly beat and close.)

I worship the feet, flawless,
that haunt the hills—
(ah sweet, dare I think,
beneath fetter of golden clasp,
of the rhythm, the fall and rise
of yours, carven, slight
beneath straps of gold that keep
their slender beauty caught,
like wings and bodies
of trapped birds.)

I worship the greatest first—
(suddenly into my brain—
the flash of sun on the snow,
the edge of light and the drift,
the crest and the hill-shadow—
ah, surely now I forget,
ah splendour, my goddess turns:
or was it the sudden heat—
on the wrist—of the molten flesh
and veins' quivering violet?)

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THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

The anonymous discussion of personalities is sometimes ill-bred. On occasion it is even dangerous. Nevertheless, we are undertaking this series of discussions of American literary figures with a light heart and high hopes that we shall not be driven to stiffer weapons than words, and that we shall always, however piercing the criticism, remain good-tempered.

The author of "The Literary Spotlight" who hides so decorously behind our person is not one but many. We find ourselves a screen for practically every critic of note in the country; for, with something like glee, they have undertaken the analysis of contemporaries who are in many cases personal friends. It will be interesting to escape, for a moment, from the curse of log-rolling, to see what those who write actually think of each other. If you would speculate as to the source of any one article, we warn you that there has been a definite attempt at concealment of style. In some cases, indeed, there has been an effort to parody another man's manner. The spirit of the entire performance, while it has the essence of foolery, is yet a conscientious effort to present an honest judgment on the state of American letters by means of a somewhat close observation of its principal figures. —J. F.

I: LOUIS UNTERMEYER

With a Sketch by William Gropper

HE was born in New York City, October 1, 1885, and is probably the least educated poet in America. His Alma Mater is the De Witt Clinton High School, from which, having flunked twice in geometry, he failed to graduate. He has been successful in concealing (1) his mathematical shortcomings from his business associates, (2) his middle name from the public. It was first intended to give him his mother's family name (Michael) but, yielding to a repressed romanticism, only the initial was kept. It was finally used for his middle name, which is Milton. He has never allowed it to appear in print.

He is five feet seven inches in height, stocky, inclined to take on weight because of an uncontrollable lust for sweets; is equally worried about the state of the world and the thinning of his hair; puns as often (and as atrociously) as Christopher Morley, and is as fussy about his neckties as a Wall Street stockbroker. The absurd smallness of his ears is overcompensated by the prominence of his nose. He has a long slanting forehead, wears eye-glasses, and affects racy colloquialisms that are not suited to his temperament. The shape of his head is dolichocephalic.

Although he prefers Virginia mixtures, he smokes any and every brand of cigarette. However he cannot stand tobacco in any other form. Once a year B. W. Huebsch persuades him to finish a cigar, which he does with unhappy consequences. He has a collection of fourteen pipes which he has tried to "break in" without success.

He originally expected to be a professional musician; he wrote a few sentimental songs in the styles of MacDowell and Schumann at eighteen, and at nineteen his first printed poem (a fulsome sonnet to Nazimova) appeared in "The Theatre Magazine". Since

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Sketched by William Gropper

LOUIS UNTERMEYER

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then he has not composed a note. But he continually deplores the fact (to anyone who will listen) that his creative gift is not musical, and he still plays the piano creditably. His favorite method of entertaining guests is to play the accompaniments while his wife sings the less well-known songs of Brahms and Hugo Wolf, and he never tires of saying that he would rather have written the "little" Eighth Symphony of Beethoven than all the tragedies of Shakespeare.

He married a girl from the incredible town of Zanesville in 1907. His wife is Jean Starr Untermeyer, also a poet. They have one child, a boy, Richard, thirteen years old, who worships only two gods: Babe Ruth and Nikolai Lenin.

His work is full of absurd self-contradictions. He bangs the drum for all the modern tendencies, scorning anything that is even faintly "academic"; yet his own poetry is as orthodox in form as the most conventional of his *bêtes noires*. Similarly, as a critic, he occupies almost opposite positions. He exposed the "Others" group to derisive laughter both in his parodies and his articles in "The New Republic". Yet he wrote a more than friendly introduction to Maxwell Bodenheim's first book of fantasies. His chapter in "The New Era in American Poetry" on the intraverted music and morbidity of Aiken's verse was vitriolic and almost libelous; yet on this vehement critique was founded a close friendship, and he will rush to Aiken's defense if anyone on the "other" side attacks the blond hermit of South Yarmouth.

This grotesque inconsistency needs no psychoanalyzer. His exaggerated pugnacity is a shield; his belligerent attitude is what the Freudians would call a defense mechanism, a protection against an inherent sentimentality to which he is always in danger of yielding. He is, like many of his race, highly sensitized, extremely adaptable, and hence open to any strong influence, subject to a succession of sudden attachments. Thus one finds him absolutely uncritical, even as a critic, of the work of intimate friends like Robert Frost and Carl Sandburg. Thus, also, one finds him, in spite of the abandon and more-than-suggested infidelities in "The New Adam", a fiercely monogamous husband, a possessive householder, a traditionally Hebraic parent.

His critical attitude leans heavily on the following terms: *banal, glib, technique, derivative, racy, indubitably, authentic, illuminating, acerbid, exaltation* (usually as opposed to *exultation), physical* (often accompanied by *as well as metaphysical), fulgent, inhibited,* and *neurotic.* His poetry, when it is most his own, seems to be ringing the changes on such favorite words as: *urge, flesh, red, triumph, fuse, wave, surge, fires, stark, rushing, energy,* and *abandon.*

He suffered from catarrh for several years, but after an incision of the nasal septum, now breathes without difficulty. He has never had a day's illness since he contracted chicken-pox at the age of five, hence his "Challenge" poetry, obviously influenced by Henley, is insufferably bouncing and muscular. However, he complains occasionally of seborrhea.

In the business world, which he entered at seventeen, he is known both as a designer and a manufacturing jeweler with radical tendencies. This is because he has espoused the cause of labor, is one of the contributing editors of "The Liberator", was connected with the trial of "The Masses" in 1918, and was one of the first manufacturers to come out for the forty-four hour week, closing his factory

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(in Newark, New Jersey) all day on Saturdays. What puzzles his fellow manufacturers is the fact that his "socialistic ideas" seem to have been not only pleasurable to him but profitable to his partners.

He takes a perverse pleasure in posing, especially when he is among literary persons, as a satisfied merchant, a member of the Board of Trade, a capitalist, a lowbrow. Yet he regards the manufacturing of jewelry as a parasitic and essentially immoral trade, and, I have it on fair authority, is making plans to resign from his firm within a year. He hopes, he says, to retire to some farm in Connecticut, study for two years, travel for three more, and then settle down as—God save the mark!—a lecturer in some lesser university.

He has a sprawling, hodgepodge library of thirty-five hundred books containing most of the dramas and practically all the representative poetry since 1890. It also contains two shelves which he calls his Chamber of Horrors. Some day he intends to use this material in an anthology to be entitled "The World's Worst Poetry". He expects to insert, among verbal atrocities by James Byron Elmore ("the Bard of the Alamo"), Julia Moore (Mark Twain's "Sweet Singer of Michigan"), J. Gordon Coogler, and other queer fowl, some of the gaudiest banalities of Cale Young Rice, Robert W. Service, and George Edward Woodberry.

He is fond of books as books, but he is no bibliophile. The only first editions he ever collected were those of H. G. Wells, D. H. Lawrence, and (at twenty-one) Richard Le Gallienne. He will sell the last at less than cost. His only prized possessions are a first edition of "The Tinker's Wedding" sent to him and autographed by J. M. Synge (he claims to have written the first American review of Synge's work), a manuscript notebook of unpublished poems by Siegfried Sassoon, and a Bible sent to him by H. L. Mencken which bears the legend "Property of the Hotel Astor" on the cover and is inscribed on the titlepage: "To Louis Untermeyer, with the compliments of The Author".

He always eats too much and never has indigestion.

He is continually harping on "individuality", he derides "influences"; yet he is vastly tickled when anyone compares him to Heine.

He is a Jew by birth and by preference, yet some of his best friends are Jews.

He has published a dozen assorted volumes of prose and verse. Yet one of them has never been offered for sale in any book store. It appeared in 1917, a pamphlet of forty pages with illustrations, and was distributed anonymously. It was called "The Wedding Ring". It does not appear in any list of his works.

He likes to think of himself as a sardonic and even silent person; and yet he is effervescent to the point of continually bubbling over nothing. Once started on an enthusiasm, he will talk at any opportunity to any audience for any length of time.

A most aggravating and unreasonable combination. A poet, yet a practical business man; a passionate propagandist, yet a critic without any axes to grind; a reviewer who has made dozens of enemies, yet an anthologist with little prejudice or partisanship....A creature mythical, fantastic, incredible—but nevertheless very much alive.

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WHAT'S WHAT AMONG THE FALL BOOKS

There is no pleasure in hard names for flowers,
Nor in acquaintance with their inner shape.
To ravish Beauty with dividing powers
Is to let exquisite essences escape.
At feasts within a flowery paradise
Parvenu Wit must yield his precedence,
Honours therein are for the nose and eyes,
For that old Exquisite, discerning Sense.
—from "The Contemplative Quarry and The Man with a Hammer" by Anna Wickham

ACCORDING to Miss Wickham's entertaining verses, we should be able to smell the quality of a book. One whiff of the binding, and the unerring nostrils of the good critic will have sensed its worth, its mediocrity, or its failure. What, then, of publishers' catalogues? What superhuman intuition can penetrate the weighty enthusiasm of the hired blurb-writer? Can one tell, for example, that a certain book announced for the fall by a reputable publisher as a serious and penetrating study of the war generation, is no more than a weakly written collection of melodramatic claptrap? Doubtless to be enjoyed by a certain public *as such*. Perhaps it is this book that has made me ill-tempered today. I shouldn't have minded reading advance proofs of it, if it had been called by its proper name; but whose nostrils would not resent, when a rose has been promised, the substitution of a skunk cabbage?

However, there is a long winter before us, and open fires in front of which to read, or even hall bedrooms and ruinous gasburners under which to strain our eyes. We must have books, and the fall gives us an unusually ripe list from which to chose; for difficulties with the binders in the spring brought many titles to a midsummer or early autumn publication and multiplied the influx of volumes to the reviewer's desk by a generous percentage. Which shall they be, then, these volumes to give our friends or to tuck away on our own shelves? I can mention only a title here and there; for everyone is publishing a book this fall. Everyone from the spread-advertised Dells, Stratton-Porters, Harold Bell Wrights, Curwoods, Norrises, Kynes, and Connors, to the collected Edward Arlington Robinson. Ever so lightly, then, must I touch, with an eye to the spots that seem high to me.

What novels to read first? Perhaps for an evening of romance, that gay and colorful yarn of Donn Byrne's, "Messer Marco Polo". For amusement, May Sinclair in a mood of fooling, with her "Mr. Waddington of Wyck", and Ring Lardner's "The Big Town". I've read advance proofs of "Ten Hours", an exquisitely written short novel by Constance I. Smith, a newcomer from England. It is a combination of the best in "Nocturne" and "Miss Lulu Bett", with a new twist that is distinctly Miss Smith's. Then there is "Beggar's Gold", because Ernest Poole is still strong in our affections for "The Harbor", and Sherwood Anderson's "The Triumph of the Egg". For youth and impudence we'll choose what they say is a most unusual first novel by an American young

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man writing with a Paris background, Edward Alden Jewell's "The Charmed Circle". Ben Hecht's brilliant performance, "Erik Dorn", John Dos Passos's superb "Three Soldiers", and Joseph Anthony's "The Gang": three powerful, if provocative novels by young Americans that will cause much discussion and, any one of them, may be seen on the important lists of the coming year.

These, perhaps, I should choose first, but there are many others! Rose Macaulay gives us a better book than "Potterism" in "Dangerous Ages". Women, particularly, will like it, and discuss it. A satire on psychoanalysis, more amusing than penetrating; but extremely good reading. There is "Privilege" by an Englishman, Michael Sadleir, which is a leisurely story of the decadence of a powerful English family. There are two Walpoles, two Cabells, and two Maughams (due to the crowding of spring lists on fall), a Snaith, a D. H. Lawrence, a Bojer, a Galsworthy, a W. L. George, a Sheila Kaye-Smith, de la Mare's prose "Memoirs of a Midget", and "The Briary-Bush", sequel to Floyd Dell's "Moon-Calf".

Both Henry Sydnor Harrison and Jeffery Farnol are among us again after fairly long silences, Farnol with a swinging romance of the high seas, "Martin Conisby's Vengeance". A young editor of the New York "Globe", Robert L. Duffus, has a first novel, the title of which we once announced incorrectly. It is now called "Roads Going South", and is said to be of a very unusual character.

The Benét brothers both have novels appearing. Stephen Vincent Benét's "The Beginning of Wisdom" is probably obtainable by now and William Rose Benét's "The First Person Singular" follows later in the season. Their sister Laura, by the way, is appearing simultaneously, with "Fairy Bread", a volume of lyrics. An astonishing family. Almost as astonishing as the Terhunes. I can see that I've failed to mention many of the most important names, such as Edgar Rice Burroughs and Magdeleine Marx (how I wish that the authors of the Tarzan books and of "Woman" would do a combination story), Edna Ferber, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Hamlin Garland, Phyllis Bottome, Dorothy Richardson, Dana Burnet, the Burts (husband and wife), the Norrises (husband and wife), Archibald Marshall, Nexö, Mrs. Rinehart, and Alice Duer Miller.

How valuable it may prove from a literary standpoint one might hesitate to say, but John Addington Symonds's daughter Margaret has written a story, "A Child of the Alps"; the wife of Senator Keyes of New Hampshire gives us "The Career of David Noble"; and Margot Asquith's extremely brilliant daughter, the Princess Bibesco, is to publish a collection of short stories.

Christopher Morley has collected and introduced a group of modern essays. There will be, too, his own "Plum Pudding" and, incidentally, a collected edition of his poems. But of all the essays, the three that most appeal to me are Logan Pearsall Smith's "More Trivia", H. M. Tomlinson's "London River", and William McFee's "Harbours of Memory". Among the American more-or-less followers in the path of Elia, there are Holliday, Benchley, and Broun, while for broader humor you can choose from Clarence Day, Jr., Irvin Cobb, Margaret Breuning, or Donald Ogden Stewart. "A Magnificent Farce, and Other Diversions of a Book-Collector" by A. Edward Newton, and "Silhouettes of My Contemporaries" by Lyman Abbott are two volumes that should be valuable and companionable.

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Milne, Hudson, Beerbohm, and Lucas are all present with books of varying slimness, while H. W. Nevinson departs from usual paths to discuss "Life, War and the Muses". For the younger generation in America, Burton Rascoe and Harold Stearns speak plainly, and "Fanfare" and "America and the Young Intellectual" will probably be much discussed.

Harry Franck's "Working North from Patagonia", and "Fairy Lands of the South Seas", the Hall-Nordhoff essays that have been appearing in "The Atlantic Monthly", and William Beebe's "Edge of the Jungle" are perhaps the outstanding travel books, though "Fountains in the Sand" and "Old Calabria", if they have even half the charm of Norman Douglas's novels, should be read. Then Ralph Stock's "The Dream Ship" sounds fascinating: a cruise over the globe in a small boat with adventures by the way. Sydney Greenbie and his wife Marjorie Barstow have written independently: the husband, "The Pacific Triangle", the lady, "In the Eyes of the East". One notes that they have different publishers. Curious or natural? William L. Stidger, Lewis R. Freeman, Julian Street, known in other fields, are represented this fall by travel: then, of course, we should not forget the burlesque Captain Traprock book interpreted by George S. Chappell. For literary fooling few performances have equaled "The Cruise of the Kawa".

In picking from among the general titles, there are so many varying interests to remember that I'm forced to rely on my own. Perhaps the most interesting title is "Civilization in the United States. An Inquiry by Thirty Americans". This is to be an attempt at a broad criticism of America in the manner of the eighteenth century encyclopædists. Among the contributors are such persons as H. L. Mencken, Van Wyck Brooks, Katharine Anthony, Robert Morss Lovett, and Harold Stearns. Another collection of opinion is to be "American Indian Life" edited by Elsie Clews Parsons. H. T. Parker's musical reminiscences and portraits are to be called "Eighth Notes". For music lovers, too, is Rolland's "Musical Journey to the Country of the Past".

Most of us know Wallace Nutting's delightful colored photographs with their old colonial atmosphere. His "Furniture of the Pilgrim Century" should be interesting. Every chess fan (and how many there are!) will want Capablanca's "Chess Fundamentals" and every aspiring writer will think that he wants Jean Wick's compilation of opinion from various editors called, "The Stories Editors Buy and Why". For those who are interested in the intimacies of great lives there are the Nietzsche-Wagner correspondence introduced by Mr. Mencken and the George Sand-Flaubert correspondence introduced by Mr. Sherman. The ambitious publisher apparently believes in the opposite poles of literary criticism.

If the season brings forth as many poor plays in book form as it already has on Broadway, we shall have a sad lot indeed; but there are some interesting promises. A third volume of adaptations from Stuart Walker's "Portmanteau Theatre", edited by Edward Hale Bierstadt, is forthcoming. James Branch Cabell's first play, given a production last winter in Richmond, is called "The Jewel Merchants". Montrose J. Moses has made a collection which has long been wanted and should prove most useful, i. e. "A Treasury of Plays for Children". There will be Sidney Howard's free verse play "Swords", Zona Gale's prize play "Miss Lulu Bett", with both her

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original and her "Broadway" endings, John Drinkwater's "Oliver Cromwell", and Kenneth MacGowan's elaborate volume on the drama, to be known as "The Theatre of To-Morrow".

It is a courageous season for poetry. Why is it that more people do not buy verse? If everyone who talked about verses bought them, we would have a public for our poets. As it is, I can think of no adequate praise for what is comparatively a handful of folk who support the publication of verse. If two thousand people were to buy six volumes of good poetry a year, the publishers of those six volumes would think that a millennium had arrived. What a state of poetic affairs! Perhaps it is because poets are meek and do not know how to assert themselves. However, this fall, we are to have, apparently, many volumes from well-known poets: Margaret Widdemer's "Cross Currents" (she has published also a novel, "The Year of Delight"), John Masefield's "King Cole", a legend of old England with plenty of plum pudding atmosphere, Masters, and Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Robert Graves, and Padraic Colum. There will be the Chinese translations by Mrs. Ayscough and Miss Lowell, Elinor Wylie's first volume, "Nets to Catch the Wind", a new volume by Walter de la Mare, one by the imagist "H. D.", and "The Fifth Book of Horace", an amusing satire by Rudyard Kipling and—Graves. Zona Gale ventures into this field with "The Secret Way". Mrs. Untermeyer and her husband both have volumes in "Dreams Out of Darkness" and the new edition of "Modern American Poetry". From the recruits of the Chicago "Daily News" come two volumes—Keith Preston's "Splinters" and Tubman K. Hedrick's "Orientations of Ho-Hen". We very nearly forgot Don Marquis, who has two and perhaps more volumes (one of short stories) included in the lists.

Children's Book Week is approaching. The spring lists were woefully lacking in titles for the young people. The fall brings forth many. I can mention only a few, and those from a sense of titles rather than from a knowledge of the books. Annie Carroll Moore, however, will discuss the complete juvenile list in our November number. For illustrated books there is Gordon Ross's "Baron Munchausen" and Wyeth's "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Andersen Fairy Book" and a Kate Douglas Wiggin abridgment of "Scottish Chiefs". Jessie Willcox Smith has illustrated George MacDonald's "The Princess and Curdie". Padraic Colum is always delightful, and "The Children Who Followed the Piper" sounds entertaining. "The Royal Book of Oz" is edited from material left by Mr. Baum. For boys there are "Daring Deeds of Polar Explorers" and "The Book of Cowboys", "The Boys' Book of Model Aeroplanes" and wild animal tales by Mortimer H. Batten. For girls there are Abbie Farwell Brown's "Round Robin", Eliza Orne White's "Peggy in Her Blue Frock", and several titles by Olive Roberts Barton. I always like titles like "An Argosy of Fables" or "A Treasury of Indian Tales", and if it hasn't too much of the moral tone, "Good Stories for Great Birthdays" might be entertaining.

There seems to be no autobiography about to appear that is likely to supplant Asquith and Bok in popularity. Perhaps that is why a new and cheaper edition of the latter has just been issued. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's Diaries are announced. These should be fascinating reading but may not reach a wide audience. James L. Ford's "Forty Odd Years in the Literary

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Shop" will contain a rich store of reminiscence from the former critic of the New York "Herald". A nice contrast is that between Moltke's autobiography and that of young Stephen McKenna whose memoirs, while doubtless colored with action, do not cover a full period of years. Then, too, we will have "The Notebook of Anton Chekhov". For biography, James Monroe, Roosevelt (by his sister), John Burroughs, Jack London (by his wife), Herman Melville, Whistler, Romain Rolland, Louise Imogen Guiney. These are only a few, and possibly Gamaliel Bradford's "American Portraits" should come under this heading.

For those who are entering on the state of matrimony is "The Small House" by Ernest Flagg; for those already married and others, Frederick Palmer's "Can We Stop War?". But as I look at this huge pile of catalogues before me, and the growing pile of books on my desk carefully marked, "To be read by J. F.", I sigh and wish you a most pleasant round of winter reading and turn, with a feeling of approaching insanity, to study Dr. Brill's new book on psychoanalysis.

—*J. F.*

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Carl Sandburg

(July, 1921)

A DAY AS A WAGE

Just the clanking of switch engines down by the station,
Just the quivering hum of a truck far away,
Just the murmur of fall and the soft respiration
Of the breezes this Sunday, this indolent day,

Just the branches above me caressing and kissing,
(And a lad out in front of me batting up flies
While two others are running to catch them and missing,
Then are smoothing their hair and arranging their ties)

Just a cloud or a twist of white smoke that is drifting
Past the squares of brick houses mapped on the hills,
Just the lid of black smoke hanging low, never lifting
From that valley of tracks and disconsolate mills,

Just the blue cigarette smoke perfuming my fingers
That is gray when it floats from my nostrils or lips,
Just a fancy or longing or something that lingers
In my thoughts into which a regretfulness slips:

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Nothing else; nothing busy; no people come scorning
One who loves to stretch out with the sun on his cheek
In a world all his own on his own Sunday morning
Which is his in return for the rest of his week.

Keene Wallis
—*The Liberator*

THE SISTERS

The Martha-in-me filled her days
With tasks devoid of joy and praise:
She polished well the furniture;
She made the locks and bolts secure;
She trimmed the lamps with barren ease;
She rubbed the ivory of the keys;
She made the windows shine and glow;
She washed the linen fair as snow.

The Mary-in-me did not stay
At home, as Martha did, each day:
She held aloof like some wild bird
Whose music is but seldom heard.
My Martha felt a little shy
Of Mary as she passed her by,
And one day hid the cloth and broom
With which she garnishes my room.
When Mary saw, she paused and pressed
A hand of Martha to her breast,
And whispered, "We must learn to do
Our labors side by side, we two."

So have the sisters found delight
In doing fireside tasks aright:
Together they have come to see
The meaning in mahogany,
Which now they rub that there may pass
A pageant in its looking-glass;
They shine the windows that the bloom
Of earth be brought within my room;
The lamps are gladly filled and trimmed,
And virgin wisdom goes undimmed;
They polish the piano keys
In readiness for harmonies;
In bolting doors they've learned as well
To throw them wide for heaven and hell,
That all who will may enter there
To be the guests of grace and prayer.

Mary and Martha in sisterhood
Dwell in me as sisters should;
They fashion a garment and kiss its hem,
And my house is in order because of them.

Louise Ayres Garnett
—*The Outlook*

GROWING UP

Gee! But I wanted to grow up.
I wanted to put on longies
And smoke cigars
And be a man.
With a pay-day on Saturday.
I wanted to grow up
And have somebody to buy sodas for,
And take to the circus
Once in a while.

We all did, then:
Pat, who could throw any kid in town,
And Don, who went to the Advent church,
And said the world was coming to an end
In Nineteen-hundred,
And Brick Top and Eppie and Skin and Spider.

We all wanted to grow up
And become pirates and millionaires and
Soldiers and Presidents and
Owners of candy stores.
And all the time we were eating home-cooking
And wearing holes in our pants,
And talking Hog-Latin
And doing what two fingers in the air
Stood for;
And saving stamps
And making things we read about
In *The Boys' World*.

Do you know how to play mumble-de-peg,
And skim rocks
And tread water,
And skin the cat?
Do you know what a stick on the shoulder stands for
And what "Comggerry wiggery meggery" means?

Skin is running a wheat farm, now,
Up in North Dakota.
Pat's on the road
Selling something or other.
Brick Top never grew up, quite,
And was making darts for a kid of his own
When I saw him last.
And Spider is yelling his head off
About Socialism and the class struggle
On street corners.

Don was with the Rainbow Division when the world ended.

Yesterday I heard a little freckle-face
Whistle through his fingers
And tell a feller called Curley
What he was going to do when he grew up.

Binny Koras
—*Rock Island (Ill.) Argus*

EDITOR'S NOTE.—*Each month* THE BOOKMAN *will select a group of poems from the American periodicals. These will be submitted to a prominent poet or critic who will choose from them "The Poems of the Month", though he will be free to add any others he may prefer. Jessie B. Rittenhouse will act as arbiter for November and December. The complete list of poems selected will be found in the Gossip Shop.*

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CARTOONS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

I. MIRABEAU

You must have shocked your father when you came,
Club-footed, pimpled. 'Twas for him as when
A gardener finds a crooked root to tend;
He feared the flower would stink and bring him shame.
He did not want your morals to be lame
At least. It was the same old thing again...
Revolt has always claimed the best in men
And so you cried, "God damn the family name!"

And yet how sad a thing it was for France...
You spent just half your strength to make France free
And half in jail through women and the dance.
And at the cry, "To arms!" you did but see
A dearer challenge in a haughty glance,
Behind the throne the lips of Queen Marie.

II. THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT

You taught more economics than a tome
Contains, you women marching on Versailles.
You were not there to save a world, or try.
Your theory was the simple monochrome
Of hunger, black as crusts you ate at home.
And either you or Louis had to die.
That simpler thinker only blinked his eye
Like Nero fiddling in the flames of Rome.

And you, Theroigne, there where none had grown,
Led forth a Reason: Women crying, "Bread,"
Plain women in the rain before a throne.
Assemblies talked; you knew not what they said.
You taught us there that hunger is the stone
We bear or hurl till we or kings fall dead.

III. CAMILLE DESMOULINS

Immortal madcap of those thronging days,
We'll say with Mirabeau, "Dear boy Camille."
You wrote Youth's name on Paris; bitter steel
You slashed with, laughing suicidal praise.
Inconstant heart, so many feared your gaze!
Although sometimes across your page a peal
Of bells rang out, their terror did not heal;
They thought Medusa sang the Marseillaise.

Revolt is endless; children press the strife,
And I, here, hold the pen you threw away.
Success, Camille, is measured life by life;
A man, but not the race, may fail his day.
May I succeed as you, that loved a wife
And rang the tocsin of the Cordeliers!

Stirling Bowen
—*The Measure*

RAIN SONGS

Did you ever notice
How many songs
The rain knows?

One night
It sang on our umbrella
Like the kisses
Soon to be born:
"Honey-dear,
I did this for you
So you could press close to him.
Look in his eyes,
If you dare,
Honey-dear!"
Oh, I loved its song that night!

But now it tantalizes me
With sharp-glinting words.
"Ah", it sparkles,
"A little silk umbrella
Is the bitter symbol
Of women who know
No big black cotton ones
To snuggle under."

Did you ever notice
That the rain
Can be merciless?

Margery Lee
—*Live Stories*

THE OUTCAST

Into the valleys I flee, into the shadows;
But there is no peace, no sanctuary.
The hills, like elephants,
Shoulder noiseless through the clouds
And close in on me.
Where shall I hide from the tread of their feet?

I have overset the gods in the temples, and there is none to protect me—
The little gods of jade with staring eyes,
The great gold and black gods with foolish faces.

Tell me, little gods of the North and East, and of the South and West,
How long shall my bones wait, lying on these rocks,
To become as white as the broken plaster
Of the images in the temple?
Tell me, true gods,
Speak a swift word!—
For the clouds descend in a hot white mist of wrath,
And through them stamp the elephants...
The terrible elephants...
Trumpeting...

Josephine Pinckney
—*Poetry*

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THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

Extracts from the Novel by Stephen Vincent Benét

(Concluded)

SNOW AND ELMS—"LIGHTS OUT, FRESHMEN!"
(1912—1913)

THE big blue scrapbook with the staring white *Y*, large as a football letter, glued on to the cover that Philip bought with such innocence and pride his third day at Yale and carefully left behind under a dead straw hat as a pitiful sop for his untipped janitor at the end of his freshman year, contained only two clippings at its fattest. One was the "News" account of the Freshman Rush and the other a thickly underlined Schedule of Courses. And Philip was not of the species that snapshots hangdog and consciously affectionate groups on the Senior Fence or treasures lightstruck films of forgotten baseball games and the stone-ax jests of fraternity "running" to delight the hearts of Class Book editors and mortify the friends thus permanently satirized past all swearing. So to him the recollection of the rapid, rich four years was like rummaging a sea-chest stowed away in an old attic—everything higgledy-piggledy, anyhow, and comfortable—ivory monkeys jostling worn brass sword-hilts, yellow love letters stuck away in a sprigged silk waistcoat, a white beaver hat full of rose-shells and elephant-chessmen and Chinese cash. And the attic smells of tar and old leather and honeysuckle—May morning drifts through the windows—the air is as light and heady as white French wine—

So dancingly, so careless of order, the memories crowd on him—little square living colored pictures, diminished but burning-clear, take form and glow on the white blank screen of the mind.

...First classes in Lampson and Phelps; Al Osborn, a steep hill of uncomfortable chairs; the bone in his throat when he is called on to rise and recite. The Rush—the sweaty pink wrestlers fighting in torchlight—the weave and swing of the snake dance—rowdy sophomores, amused juniors, cool seniors, hatless and statuesque like wandering marble gods—all a mêlée of breaking song, processional lights, and cheers. Early mornings of Battell Chapel and its dim irreligious light with the whole sleepy college congregated together—his own class in the gallery observing that strange new entity, itself, with drowsy surprise and wonderment—two familiar faces in five hundred—the hiss of the *s's* in the Lord's Prayer as it runs through the kneeling crowd like wind through corn—the indecorous stampede toward the doors after the fleeing President when the seniors have bowed him out, that the "Record" irreverently caricatured as "The Passing of Arthur".

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Then there were preliminary football games watched from the cramped hard benches of Yale Field under the cider-apple air and swept gold sunsets of October and early November—the smash of the two caterpillar-legged lines together like the impact of shocking pool balls on green, white-gridironed baize, with the little live blue dolls always breaking through, always gaining—lonely backs crouching taut before a trick play with the single will and hard eyes looking ahead of weathered knights in a tournament or seamen holding on to a bucking wheel—Bob Sailer, captain and all-American half, the yellow egg of the ball cuddled up in his arms like a baby, in a fox-footed thirty yard run through the whole Amherst team—the wrenched fierce face of a fullback, running back to his position after a javelin-thrust through tackle—yelped signals, strangely distinct in the clear breeze that came with the burnt-sienna decline of evening, and the stilt-like black H's of the goalposts flinging taller, dark shadow-capitals, on the ending battle that tore the careful sod to dirt and torn grass.

Philip took long walks in the weeping month before Easter when he dared consider leaving off fur gloves. He splashed about in unbuttoned galoshes through streets and under skies that were glutted with grey heavy glistening rain. The sopping walk crosswise across the campus from

"Osborn, that weird fantastic dream
in stone
Crouched like a squatting toad with
open lip
Or like a ferry-boat, banged, battered, blown

Bumping a beaten nose into its slip", past Connecticut, under the draggled, brown-sugar tower of Phelps with its four green-rusty turrets that clear night and a moon made shine like silver helms, was on uneven flags, glinting dead-leaf color with the wet. On Philip's left was the brown New Library, a square tall block, flanked on the Art School side by the squat Chinese-parasol top of Chittenden Reading Room, on the right by the four fretted spires of the Old Library that rose so blackly satisfying against the colored dome of spring sunset. In May and early June the Library ivies talked; musical over and over with the soft continual curring and whistle of birds. Mushroom-shaped, mushroom-colored Dwight Hall on the left again, on the right the red high honeycomb line of Lawrence and Farnam, slantingly ahead the grey hulk of Battell Chapel with its chiming, gold-handed clock—Miller Gateway and the great rocky mass of Durfee. All around the little patch of soaking earth and its trees and its statues ran the Fence, sacrosanct, covered with generations of initials. At the end of the path Wright Hall with its paved and hollow court and its two prim lions. Young melancholy in all its poignant satisfaction Philip had always from that three minute walk, when the ground was covered with rotten snow or bare, and the elms sighing and leafless. But when spring came—Connecticut spring as frail and intoxicatingly green-and-gold as the limbs of a Puritan girl turned oread—or rich autumn wandered the round calm hills and brown fields, shaking multitudes of scarlet and tawny leaves from the profusion of his wine-stained reeling cup—Philip found such happiness as is not given twice. He tried to put it down in rhymes often enough but knew each word that came to him fainter than the thing. But the map of the campus stayed in his mind—bitten there as an etching is bitten into a plate. He could remember it al-

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ways, later, under every trick and pulsation of shade or weather, and it always brought with it peace and that sense of fed accomplishment that comes like sleep after hours of annihilating toil.

Other snapshots were his to remember too—Book and Snake tomb under April moonlight, serene as the face of Pallas, the Greek temple of a dream—the statue of Nathan Hale on the grass in front of Connecticut with red wintry sun like a libation on bronze shoulders, bronze throat, bronze eyes—the clamor of Mory's at mealtime, only needing the brassy flutter of a horn or a call for grilled bones to make it a coaching inn like Mr. Weller's where all the characters of Dickens could be at home and drink ale out of toby-jugs. Philip had the romantic eye and the wandering mind. They are priceless exhausting burdens in a practical world.

One more picture—Philip alone in his room on an idling May afternoon. He starts to read, but the letters stay letters. Starts to draw, produces three witless caricatures in five minutes and scratches them out disgustedly. Looks at his watch, decides it is too early for the movies and marches aimlessly for a while between bed and desk. All day something intense, something nameless has been working and fretting at his spirit like brewer's yeast. He wants something, something tremendous and unnamed, something outside of himself and bright and entire and huge. The want has grown fiercely painful now, it has taken possession of him completely; but the thing desired is so great and so external, it is as if he wished for the properties of the lens of a camera or an eye to be able to shrink the whole vast face of the moon into a little black-and-white pitted scene that vision and brain can understand. He sits down at the desk, takes paper and pencil, stares at the wall. It dissolves, so intently does he gaze at it—wreathing bodies and eggs of smoke appear, grow clearer—out of the nebulous rolling world in front of his thought appears a lit, hard, definite form, a woman walking. It is Isis, queen of blue Heaven and the two Egypts; she is hooded in silver silk. Bells tinkle and jar as she walks, a multitude of throaty small golden bells. She stands before him motionless, the burning gems of her eyes lift to his gaze, she begins to sing. Behind her the Sphinx lies down like a lion asleep and there rise against the sky the three stiff horns of the Pyramids.

Philip drops his head on his left arm, his hand begins to make shuddering progress across the paper. "Isis" it writes and erases, then "Isis of the Sands", draws a line under it, hesitates doubtfully, but lets it stand.

"Measureless sand...interminable sand..."

The pencil shakes and crawls, the hand moves spiderwise, the letters form more carelessly....If he can only grip and paint clear what he sees with his eyes!...

".....the Sphinx alone
Couched on her forepaws, like a sleepy hound
Under the weight of a caress of rock
And smiled her woman's and chimera's smile
Inexorably, drowned with the savage dark.

The black tide filled the heavens up and ceased.
A little tonguing flame ran on the sand..."

Isis is speaking now—she has loosed the first of her veils and her voice sways and floats like a pennon of clouded red. The words swing into

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lines, the lines inch down the page, slow and cautious at first, with many scratched out or written over, then swifter and more swift, untroubled, an effortless dancing, a streaming current. The daze of creation makes all Philip's body hot while its passion lasts. After an amount of indefinite time that has no division into minutes, the tide crests and turns to its ebb, the writing runs down, the shapes disintegrate, thin into wraiths, are nothing. Philip wrestles them back before him with a rasping effort of will, writes four quick lines in a strain like the last spurt of a sprinter, relaxes utterly and throws the pencil up to the ceiling. He then looks at his watch; it is six o'clock and he has been writing five hours without a break. He chuckles and shakes himself all over like a dog coming out of water. After a while he starts to reread his poem.

Tom Whitter, coming in about seven, finds him typing and cursing softly as he types.

"Hi, Tom!"

"Hi, Phil! Had dinner?"

"No."

"Why not, you silly idiot? Do you know what time it is?"

"Sure," with conscious pride. "I've been writing."

"Well, you look pepped-out enough. Come over and get a shredded or something."

"Wait a minute. I've got one more page to go. Oh, just wait till I show you this, Tom! It's good—I know it's good—I know it's damn good—damn good for me, any way—oh Tommy, it's the best thing I've ever done in my life!..."

"THE JUNIOR FRATERNITIES . . . ANNOUNCE THE ELECTION OF . . . " (1913—1914)

When Philip and Tom had exchanged the reformatory walls of Pierson for the stuffy comfort of Durfee and discovered that all prints and pictures, however framed or hung, harmonized just as badly with the weak arsenic-green of their present quarters as they had with the tomato-bisque plaster of their former ones, the five junior fraternities started calling on sophomores.

The "calling" was a singular business—much heavy tramping up and down the entry stairs—appearance of a group of four or five tongue-tied or professionally affable strangers, each giving a mumbled name and a set firm handshake as he entered—ghastly spurts of forced talk of the "You fellows certainly live a long way up!" or "Pretty nice lot of pictures you've got here" order—an obviously relieved departure after two minutes of such uneasy badinage and long stares, with consultations, sometimes cruelly audible, on the part of the calling committee as soon as their last man shut the door, and a general sinking feeling on Philip's part that he had ruined his chances with *that* bunch forever and ever as he and Tom dashed for a hidden Pot-Pourri to find out, by looking up as much as they could recall of their visitors' grumbled appelations, just what fraternity it was that had called.

"Hey Phil, that guy's name was Keating, wasn't it?"

"Keator, I think."

"Well, there's a Keating in Zete and a Keator in Psi U. Remember any more of them?"

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"Smith," doubtfully.

"Oh Lord, there are four Smiths and they're all different places. Call 'em Zete—if they are that makes three calls from them. Could you see their pins?"

"Not a chance. Now who were the crowd that skinny fellow named Wilkes ran with?"

Tom flutters the leaves obediently, another committee knocks and instantly enters—a Campaign Committee this time by their funeral derbies and the grim fixed grin on their mouths. Tom and Philip are caught red-handed but the former's kangaroo leap to sit on the incriminating book brings a roar of laughter that saves the situation. And so it goes.

After three such evenings Psi U, which Chubby Post has nicknamed "The Holy Ice House" since it runs to the pious athlete, prominent Christian, and impeccable parlor-snake, and has more fanatic internecine feuds and a larger proportion of men in senior societies than any of the others, decides that Philip is a good deal too queer for even its carefully preserved reputation for impersonal selection and it doesn't want the trouble of educating him up to Brooks, Frank's, and the Lawn Club Dances. Philip's senior friends in Deke have done their best, but the class has such a large number of pleasant liquorers and friendly muscular mammoths that it is like trying to gain for a singing-mouse the friendship and trust of a herd of respectable bull-elephants. Bete and Zete, Religion's Serious Call and the Sporting Life, the sacred and profane twins of college politics, trail on to the end but only to shake their heads.

Hold-off night, and the sophomore dormitories tense and sweltering as air before a thunderstorm. The silent or nervously chattering fraternity men with their carnations, blossoms colored with fate, making bright spots up and down the entries and under the yellow lamplight by the Fence. The strain of the last ten minutes before seven, like the strain before the start of a crew race that makes graduates drum on their knees with white-knuckled fingers. The breathless jokes between men who are "sure", the executioner's quiet of the doubtful. Clustered chairs and a dumb small anxious crowd in front of the room across the hall where Deke, Psi U, and Zete are to fight it out over the modest and undecided body of the first-string quarterback. Then Battell clock starts its clanging, casual chime—and Farnam and Durfee and Lawrence burst on the instant into a madhouse of shouts and cheers and running shapes. Philip waits in his room, no one has come for him, three minutes past, he is sweaty at the hands. Steps trample up—and past—a dark, straining figure bolts the stairs outside his open door—there is a shriek "Yeah! we got Bunny Vick!"—and two men with Zete carnations come rocketing down like a charge of horse, the dazed Vick between them, his hat crammed over his eyes.

Tom clears a dry throat. "You'll get it, fellah!" he says. "You'll get it!"

"Hope so. Listen—Deke's starting to go off, I think—"

He pokes his head out of the window. A broken, gasping snatch of song begins, breaks, rises to a roaring chant with the crash of rollicking feet beating out the tune.

"The *jolly* brothers of *D. K. E.* we march along..."

"Phil!" screams Tom in his ear.

He turns. A panting classmate rushes in followed by two pink-carnationed A. D. juniors and jams a square of paper under his eyes.

"Will you accept a hold-off to Alpha

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Delta Phi if it is offered you?" is written on the paper.

Philip nods. "Yes," he says thickly.

His hand is shaken violently three times, nearly wrung off.

"You come with us Friday night," yells the classmate and he and the juniors ramp away like the close of a waking dream.

The fraternities, singing loud, rock off the campus....Noise dies, against Philip's eyes night is cool and dark. Through the tatter of elm leaves he can see three silver pricking points that must be stars....

Tom congratulates him gravely. Philip feels happy, enormously relieved and—let down, like a man after a strenuous ten minutes in the hot room of a Turkish Bath.

"Come on and go to the movies, you old tin-pirate," he suggests, and they wander over the peace of the campus down Chapel Street to the Globe, to sit dopily through two hours of Bessie Barriscale and other people's breath.

And then there was spring hold-off night, when Philip, for the first time in his life, got thoroughly drunk. He had been out with Skinny Singleton in the hour between six and seven, discussing the Grand Style in Writing over double Bronxes in the cool leather-lined cavern of the Taft bar, and the discussion had reached the "What I mean is gra-grand—grand, y'understand?" stage when it was time for both to return to the rooms they were guarding. Both watched the proceedings through a jocund fog and adjourned to Mory's and as much as they were able to poach of the various fraternity green-cups later. Steve Brackett has gone Deke, and they congratulate him with reservations. Mory's is packed and turbulent with the warring crowds and songs of three fraternities. Philip drinks steadily and of anything that comes handy, and begins to feel his mind expand like a blown-out paper snake—expand and at the same time grow uncannily, unearthly clear.

Physically, he is seventeen yards tall, he could break a varsity tackle between finger and thumb. A vast pity—the pity of the broken-hearted ancient gods—falls on him like a silver mist, for all this shuffling riot of humanity that swarms about him. He treads like a god on shoes covered with wings over the crystal wreckage and crumbling jeweled shards of disintegrated worlds. Stafford Vane, king of Deke and his pet abhorrence, puts affectionate arms and a weeping face on his shoulder. He is filled on the instant with immense and nameless pride. "Staff'd's not all right, but *I'm* all right—*Staff'd's* not all right BUT *I'm* all right!" juggles through his head like the ring of "The Marseillaise". *"I'll* give you speech!" he shouts, clambering a table, "good speech. Fine speech. All 'bout how A. D. cleaned up on Deke!..."

Suddenly, he is out on the street, reclined on the steps of the Zete tomb...

That passes in a phantasmagoric flicker. He is ascending stairs, intolerable, unending stairs.

They are the stairs inside the U-Club. A boiling crowd of Zetes, Psi U's, and Dekes greet him with affectionate whoops. Somebody gives him an open quart bottle of champagne. Somebody else pulls his chair out from under him. He gets up with a vague lust for indefinite blood but everyone has started to march around the billiard table singing, "We'll drink, drink, drink, drink, drink, drink, drink to the Eta" and he joins the distorted procession with eyes that make every color screamingly bright and hands and feet that seem six miles off

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from his body. "'s this a merry-go-round?" he asks uncertainly. "Where's the horses? Where's brass rings?"

Somebody starts throwing pool balls....

There is a great ocean of voices talking somewhere far outside of him. He listens, bends his will like a spring, and reduces the voices into words.

One, faint as a gnat's, is shouting, "Hey Steve! Hey Billy! Come out here! There's a man outside your door that can't speak and doesn't know his own name!"

"'s absurd! Name's Alg'non Swin Swinburne. Grea' poet!" murmurs Philip.

The last memory is that of being inserted pajamaless into a bed.

"Put p'jamas over me," he explains. "On top. Useful. Warm. Ant'septic. D'corative."

Steve's face rises over him like a moon.

"So drunk," it says. "*So* drunk. And such a good time!"

PRETTY WORDS

By Elinor Wylie

POETS make pets of pretty, docile words:
I love smooth words, like gold-enameled fish
Which circle slowly with a silken swish,
And tender ones, like downy-feathered birds:
Words shy and dappled, deep-eyed deer in herds,
Come to my hand, and playful if I wish,
Or purring softly at a silver dish,
Blue Persian kittens, fed on cream and curds.

I love bright words, words up and singing early;
Words that are luminous in the dark, and sing;
Warm lazy words, white cattle under trees;
I love words opalescent, cool, and pearly,
Like midsummer moths, and honied words like bees,
Gilded and sticky, with a little sting.

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TRANSPLANTING THE CHICAGO CRITIC

By Percy Hammond

A PROVINCIAL reviewer of the theatres, nearing the Great Adventure of promotion to the drama's capital, pauses for a tremulous moment to take stock of his emotions. For many seasons he has brooded in his garret in the outlands, and looked wistfully toward Broadway, the inspiration and pregnant source of dramatic masterpieces. A gloomy fate, making second-hand estimations of the chefs-d'œuvre of the American stage, months after they have been investigated by Mr. Woollcott, Mr. Rathbun, and other occupants of the urban judgment seat! It will be 1922, he reflects sullenly, before the arrival in Chicago of "Snapshots of 1921"; and the works of Eugene O'Neill and Owen Davis, of Willard Mack and Barrie, will alike be spilt milk when they reach the doorstep of the Union Loop. He reads of the experiences of Burns Mantle's soul at "Ladies' Night" and "The Whirl of New York", and he ponders how much sounder would have been his own reflections upon and reports of those occasions. What does Louis De Foe know of art, he finds himself demanding; and Lawrence Reamer's critiques of the "Scandals" and "Jim Jam Jems" he regards as shallow and not felicitous.

Thus, a malignant envy withers his arteries. He writes in derision of New York City, compiling columns of scorn and sneers to prove that it is ignoble both as a place of residence and as a headquarters of the theatre. He ransacks the glossary of anathema for new terms of sly opprobrium with which to express his contempt for the metropolis. The footnote, habitual to the play-bills, "Time, the Present; Place, New York", engenders within him a dull choler; and he sees red when the advertisements in Chicago announce "The Original New York Cast", and republish the obnoxious opinions of Heywood Broun of New York instead of his own complimenting decrees. In his heart he knows that his feelings are but the bitter fruit of jealousy; and he explains that were it not for his books, his rostrum engagements, his pet charities, and the difficulty of making new enemies at his time of life, he would abandon Chicago's arid theatre plains and set out for the fertile gardens and billowy fields of Broadway.

But now that the anabasis is arranged, and the zero hour impends, he finds his valor truant and replaced with perturbing doubts and fears. No longer does he view himself as the Titan, stirring from his crag en route to Olympus, but rather as a weak and frightened upstart who might swoon at the sight of a Shubert. His acquaintances aid him in the accumulation of his anxieties. The scores of actors who have said, "Broadway needs you, my boy!" now put the dread lump of terror in his throat with sad owl-songs, portentous of disaster. Friendly managers who many times have proved to him that he "belongs in New York", now suspect him to be unripe for the exploits and mighty en-

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terprises of a critic's career in a great city.

He learns of the pronouncement by a thrall of one of the great producing houses, that if he is as unfair to their product in New York as he was in Chicago, banishment from their theatres will ensue. Standing propitiatory and unknown in the foyer of an Atlantic City playhouse, he overhears odds offered by one showman to another that muffled drums will beat for him before he has learned the via dolorosa from the theatre district to Park Row. Fellow journalists warn him that the readers of the New York "Tribune" are smart and urbane, the deep purple of the playgoers, and that he must amend the gauche practices indigenous to prairie criticism, to conform to their exacting requirements. They will not endure his egregious shortcomings, he is warned, with the forbearance that distinguished the attitude of his Chicago clientele—the most patient and sympathetic of their species; and he will miss the paternal compassion with which the great, wounded journal he has abandoned forgave his frequent infractions of its dignity and reticence.

This long, detailed, and truthful assembling of the embarrassments attendant upon a summons to court, is by no means complete. The timid adventurer on the rim of foreign regions now compares the ease with which dramatic criticism is composed in the outskirts, to the rigors of a first-night review in New York. The Chicago critic appraising "Lightnin'", for instance, has only to decide on its value as art, its worth as amusement having been established for him by its years of popularity in the east. The New York critic, while being faithful to his æsthetic standards, must also think of the comfort of his readers, and be able to tell them whether they will like a play though it is bad, or disdain it though it is good.

What shall the new boy wear at a Winter Garden première? Must he desert the dressy Tux of the Great Lakes for the faultless evening attire of the Atlantic littoral? He remembers the predicament of Tom Mix, the movie man, who at a banquet in New York, "et for three hours and didn't recognize a single victual except a reddish". With only forty minutes after the final curtain in which to congregate and express his judgments, will the neophyte get lost in the subway? And if he does will anybody care?

In case the foregoing index of proposed miseries seems at times to have been formulated in a mood somewhat antic, let me whose agues it suggests, tell THE BOOKMAN that it is but a whistling to keep from being afraid. Gone are the brave dreams picturing Broadway as a chafed lion, cowering beneath my jaunty huntsman's gaze; and in their place come visions of an affrighted mongrel pursuing a fleet but reluctant course down the Rialto. Tin can to tail, he is uttering piteous yelps of discomfort, while Morris Gest, the Selwyns, Louis Mann, Samuel Shipman, Sophie Tucker, Van and Schenck, A. H. Woods, and the Dolly Sisters humiliate his haggard shanks with bruising missiles. To such actors, managers, and playwrights who may hopefully anticipate a realization of this dream, I desire to recall the familiar admonishment contained in "The Honeymoon", an ancient and a sterling drama, which, a bit paraphrased, runs thus:

He that lays his hand on a new critic
Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch
Whom 'twere gross flattery to call a coward!

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BROADWAY, OUR LITERARY SIGNPOST

By Kenneth Andrews

With Sketches by the Author

"DULCY" by George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly is written with a bow of acknowledgment to Franklin P. Adams for the loan of the principal character. This might provide a text for some popular scientist or writer of syndicated uplift. It would be interesting to know what effect column conductors, as a class, have upon the country. For thousands the humorous column in the morning newspaper is a breakfast staple as indispensable as the poached egg or coffee. It is the mental pick-me-up of the nation. It is really more than that. The average American reads practically nothing but his newspaper, and he does not read much of that. He glances over the first page, skips to the sporting page to see what the home team did the day before, then turns to the column and reads it with absorption from top to bottom. And the spirit of the column is one of mockery. Thus thousands of good citizens go to their daily toil every morning, their native orthodoxy slightly tarnished by the impiety of their favorite column conductor.

LYNN FONTANNE

Excellent as the busy young hostess in "Dulcy" who will be at home every night at her town house, just west of Broadway, for many months to come.

It is just possible that this may have something to do with the general decline of hero worship among us, and the growing disposition to call attention to the flat feet of our national idols. It may have nothing whatever to do with it; but there can be no doubt that we live in a skeptical time. Broadway, ever sensitive to the changing mood, reflects this skepticism most vividly in the plays of the early season. No less than five of them are definitely satirical in spirit, and of these three devote themselves to the native culture. That is quite astonishing. Satire has long been considered a lost art among our playwrights and among our novelists as well. George Ade has had a lonely time trying to keep it alive. If Broadway's receiving apparatus is as well attuned as it has usually been, he is to have company.

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"Dulcy" is a breezy comment on the here and now, as up to the minute as the column in this morning's newspaper, and in general content it covers much the same ground. It is a haphazard sort of play into which the authors have tossed a glittering array of bright odds and ends, plucked at random from the life about us. This lack of coherent dramatic plan at least has the virtue of leaving the playwrights free to take a fling at whatever occurs to them. A number of things occur to them. As the evening goes on their fancy moves in wider and wider circles until the play really becomes a robust and rather sweeping satire of manners—one of the first and one of the best to reach our stage in many seasons.

THE DRAMA SHELF

"A Short History of the English Drama" by Benjamin Brawley (Harcourt, Brace). A concise outline of the beginnings of English drama and a Who's Who of British dramatists from the time of John Heywood (remember him?) to Bernard Shaw, with a thumbnail biography of each.

"One-Act Plays by Modern Authors" edited by Helen Louise Cohen (Harcourt, Brace). Sixteen more or less standard plays, with a general introduction telling what a one act play is not, and discussing the decline and fall of the Little Theatre movement. Also a special introduction for each play and, for the insatiable, the innumerable footnotes supply a full bibliography.

"Ten One-Act Plays" by Alice Gerstenberg (Brentano). Including, of course, "Overtones" which goes in the library as well as it does in the theatre.

"Four One-Act Plays" by Lewis Beach (Brentano). This author's twenty minute Civil War tragedy, "The Clod" (familiar to communicants of the Keith circuit), and three later plays.

Dulcy is the effervescent young matron who goes in for all the Movements, and who has a ready bromide for every human need. Fresh from her Friday Afternoon Club, she comes in with her arms full of flowers.

DULCY. Hello, everybody! Mm! It's cool in here, isn't it? You know, if there's any breeze going at all, we get it in this room. Well, Willie *(to her brother)* whom have you been doing? *(She laughs at her own joke.)*

Of course after that we can all imagine Dulcy. She naturally insists on helping Gordie, her husband, in his extremely ticklish business deal with C. Roger Forbes. Gordie makes pathetic attempts to avoid being helped; but Dulcy knows her duty: she is his wife and helpmeet, and her place is at his side fighting the battle of life shoulder to shoulder. She has invited Forbes and his wife and daughter for the week-end, and has captured two tame tea lions from the culture club to help entertain them.

GORDON. But, Dulcy, Forbes isn't the kind of man that wants to be entertained—

DULCY. Leave Mr. Forbes to me, darling. Just wait. I've got a real surprise for you.

GORDON *(in alarm)*. Another surprise?

Her surprise is that she is going to arrange a match between Angie, Forbes's daughter, and Vincent Leach, the famous scenario writer. "If I fix it," she explains, "Mr. Forbes would be so grateful he'd have to give you more than 16-2/3 per cent of the combination." This is only one of the little helps she has thought of. For another she is going to see that Forbes has not one dull moment while he is a guest under her roof. He does not have a dull moment. Dulcy entertains him intensively. By morning he is a desperate, trapped soul. His little

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AUGUSTIN DUNCAN

As the farmer, in "The Detour", who doesn't know anything about art or care a dang about it, he is better than he was as John Ferguson, and everyone knows what that means.

Angie has eloped. His wife has lied to him. He washes his hands of both of them, and of Dulcy's suppressed husband as well. But happily, during the night, Angie has married Dulcy's brother Willie, instead of the movie person as she had intended. This arranges everything; and Dulcy gracefully accepts credit for it, reminding Forbes that captains of industry never understand women.

"Honors are Even" is also satire, but in a different mood. It would probably be a better play if Roi Cooper Megrue did not know so much about play writing. He has had a busy career as a play doctor; and when, as in this case, he wants to speak naturally and sincerely, the professional bedside manner clings to him. Behind the play one senses an alert and sophisticated mind which seeks to unburden itself. Frequently the leisurely movement of the story is halted entirely while this blasé Broadway author indulges himself in some irrelevant and lengthy observation on the general futility of the human comedy. He has the power of making these moods infectious on the stage by means of casual, natural talk, and to blend one mood into the other, allowing the story to shape itself through them. That is a rare gift in a dramatist, but Mr. Megrue is not quite able to surrender himself to it. As he approaches the end of an act habit overcomes him.

Thus, after a first act which is keyed down to the persuasive naturalness of everyday, which sets on the stage the loosely knit episodes in the love life of Belinda Carter, he, quite unnecessarily, makes one of her suitors a diamond thief. It would have been no more incongruous if the correct William Courtenay had taken off his coat and livened things up with a soft shoe dance. In the next act Belinda goes to John Leighton's room, and again life is the model. They have an unhurried evening of chatter over their wine, exploring each other's minds, discovering that they speak the same language. But as curtain time approaches the author is again seized with stage fright. The villainous rival discovers the lovers; the scene is twisted out of all semblance of reality, and ends with Leighton locked in his own rooms with the faithful old servant who had come to chaperone Belinda. And it happens that on this very night the superintendent has mislaid his keys, and the elevator boys are all off duty, or something of the sort.

The story is the one about the bachelor who poses as a woman hater and is finally brought low by the girl he had declared he would never marry. The antiquity of the fable matters not, however, for the people are human and the kind you like to know, except when they are being hustled about to provide a wallop for the curtain.

The notion exploited by Thomas P.

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Robinson in "The Skylark" is that when two people are unhappily married they should get a divorce, but continue to live in the same house with the understanding that each shall enjoy complete freedom of action. At first glance the conceit seems to be a promising start for a satire on married life; but the curious thing is that the more you examine it the less you find in it. Just how such a sham divorce could affect the lives of the unhappy pair in the slightest is a mystery. Why not pretend to be divorced and save the lawyer's fees for a possible second honeymoon? There is no need of pointing out the absurdity of the idea here, of course, for that is exactly what the playwright has written three long acts to show. Ridiculing an arbitrarily selected premise, which is patently false, is a mistake made by nine out of ten home-talent satirists, and Mr. Robinson, a new writer for the stage, should not be too harshly punished for it. He tried to write a fantastical satire on American married life, and—as in the case of the dog who walked on his hind legs—while he didn't do it very well it was something to have done it at all.

"March Hares" by Harry Wagstaff Gribble purports to treat of the excessively temperamental, but seems more like a gay picture of a ward for the incurably neurasthenic. Every person in the play is strange in one way or another, which is a fatal error, since it makes impossible the contrast with the normal which alone could give point and clarity to such giddy satire. As it is, one confidently awaits the arrival of the keepers who will coax everybody back to the asylum. This scene is not included, and the play merely gives the impression of being astoundingly naïve.

The flapper is one of the after-war problems about which everyone has a theory. As the American woman of the future she is either amusing or alarming, depending on one's relationship to her. Many plays will no doubt be written about her. This season she may take the place on our stage left vacant by the little oriental innocent who swore in broken English; which would be progress of a sort. In "The Teaser" by Adelaide Mathews and Martha M. Stanley an attempt is made to do her in terms of the old formula about the little country girl who comes to live in the big house in the city, and makes everyone love her. This grafting of a new flower on an old vine is clumsily done; and the authors turn out a pale farce which includes one of the most unprovoked seductions in recent stage history.

WILLIAM COURTENAY

Who is living down his reputation as a matinee idol by his performance as the free lance woman hater in "Honors are Even".

Odd as it may seem, the first play of genuinely thoughtful intent comes from the tireless typewriter of Owen Davis. Some years ago—five or six at least—we remember reading a mag-

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azine article by Mr. Davis in which he gave testimony as to his conversion to the higher drama. He confessed that he had been writing tawdry thrillers about cloak models and sawmills for years, and that he was tired of it. He was ready to settle down to the realization of his long thwarted desire to write an honest play about real people. He has just got around to that play.

It is called "The Detour", and is a simple story of a simple woman who, for twenty years, has been the lawful drudge of a Long Island rustic. Throughout this long period of servitude, quiescent rebellion against the commonplace and monotony of her bleak life has burned in her breast. With the approach of middle age her own hope for the finer things fades, and she seeks to find a vicarious fulfilment of her dreams in the life of her daughter. Where the play touches on this pathetic solace of the middle years it passes irony and skirts, by implication at least, the depths of genuine tragedy. It seems that Mr. Davis stumbles on this admirable tragic theme almost inadvertently. It is as though his people, whom he has drawn with simple fidelity, may have led him to it. These people are, in the beginning, drawn without haste, and with a thriftiness of detail born of accurate, facile technique. Thereafter the story grows inevitably from them; and it is told with the same firm, sure strokes. It is true that after letting the tragic little tale have its head for two acts, the author summons all his cunning to soften its cruelty and leave a glimmer of uplift for the more susceptible of his audience. But even in this overly dexterous act he does not seem insincere. Eugene O'Neill or St. John Ervine would have taken Helen Hardy to her Gethsemane and left her there; Mr. Davis suggests a way out for her. And the Helen Hardys on the dreary farms and in the drearier small towns do go on living somehow. The play is honest and thoughtful in purpose, and expert in craftsmanship.

Two plays even more thoughtful in purpose are "The Mask of Hamlet" by Ario Flamma, and "The Triumph of X" by Carlos Wupperman. The former is a bungling attempt to dramatize the Wall Street bomb disaster and the red menace in general, and has the fault of most propaganda plays. To prove his theories the author cites a most exceptional and special case, and succeeds in proving nothing except that, before you blow up a bank, you should make sure your father is not in it.

"The Triumph of X" deals with the familiar undergraduate question of the relative importance of heredity and environment in the shaping of our destiny. It postulates the theory that there is another force in life, which we may call X, which has more to do with it than either. It sounds rather cosmic for a Broadway play; but, though no people ever talked as these people talk, the piece has its moments of power. Heredity, in the shape of a taste for strong drink, fights with the scholarly environment of her foster-father's home for the soul of Phillis. When Phillis takes her first glass of champagne, heredity claims her for his own. He makes off with her into the night, and together they are "laughing their way to Hell", when love, under the alias of X, comes to the rescue. In spite of stilted writing and faulty construction the play never becomes entirely ridiculous. Helen Menken does all that any human could to endow Phillis with life; and behind the play is a burning intellectual earnestness which, while it fails

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to create illusion, at least arrests the attention by its very intensity.

"Sonya" by Eugene Thomas Wyckoff is an old-fashioned comic opera without music, and without much comedy. From the moment Prince Paul and his aide de camp swagger in with their sabres and flapping black boots, one apprehensively watches the doors for the appearance of the merry villagers. The play takes place in the chamber of a royal prince somewhere in the Balkans—in the good old days before they became a situation. The walls of the chamber are of smoky stone; through the lofty lattice at the rear the sky glows in the sunset and pales in the moonlight. Off stage the male members of the cast give an imitation of Russian gardeners singing, while the peasant girl says to the prince, "Tell me you love me again!" The prince fights for his love against the intrigues of his courtiers, and of course it would be unfair to tell who comes out ahead. One is a little disappointed that there isn't more dirty work on the part of the prince's relatives; but Sonya and her prince have much love making to do and many costumes to wear, and the play is pretty long as it is. It is "Graustark" on the stage, and will probably live long and screen well.

REGRESSION

By Joseph Freeman

I HAVE grown tired of wise men and their ways,
Who find the music of the heart too old,
Wonder a platitude too often told,
Love a cliché, and tears a banal phrase:

I have grown tired of them, and dream of days
When, moving through a fragrant mist of gold,
I watched the passions of the world unfold
Like crimson shadows over wide blue bays.

And, dreaming of this heaven, I retrace
The bright and certain ways of innocence:
Proclaim my joy and sorrow on my face,

Open the doorways of my mind to men,
Love women quickly and without pretence—
And learn my bitter wisdom over again...

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THE LONDONER

Vacation News—The Seriousness of Modern Writers—Compton Mackenzie and D. H. Lawrence—New Books by Walter de la Mare and Hall Caine—"Max's" Vogue—American Books in England—The Need for a Chekhov.

LONDON, *August* 1, 1921.

THIS is more markedly the summer season than any I have known, and all the writers are away sitting in the sea or traveling upon the continent of Europe. To a person like myself, who rarely gets any holiday worth speaking about, this activity of rest is a delightful spectacle; but I must admit that it is tantalizing. To receive a letter every few days from some one of the confraternity dated from Wales or Switzerland or Italy or the High Seas, is all very well. It is not a true substitute for the enjoyment of those same climatic conditions in the flesh. My spirit is, of course, with the travelers. And what a band they are! The last news I had of Hugh Walpole, for instance, was that he was pausing in Switzerland on the verge of a spin into northern Italy. He had finished and even read the proofs of a new novel called "The Young Enchanted". That in itself is good news, and gives the author the right to take such a holiday as he plans. I hope very much that this lively book, which will show Walpole in a new light to his readers (though not to his friends), will meet with great success. Walpole is one of the most indefatigable writers I know, and he deserves all his success.

* * * *

Another piece of news, this time from Italy, is that Aldous Huxley has finished a new novel, in the Peacockian manner, called "Crome Yellow". The spelling of Crome is deliberate, for this is the name of the house at which many of the incidents occur. The book is quite short, but it is bound to give glimpses of that humor which Amy Lowell rightly says is too often absent from the printed works of our young writers. The book will be published this autumn, no doubt, and it will be interesting to see what our generation will make of a kind of novel to which they turn with piquant delight when it appears as a classic. I am told that "Crome Yellow" represents a marked expansion of Huxley's peculiar gifts of bizarre and nonsensical humor.

This question of humor in modern works has been giving me some sleepless nights. For it may be said at once that most of the modern writers are more serious in their work than their ordinary conversation would lead one to expect. I cannot assert that all are humorists; but at least there are very few prigs among the total number. Yet give our young men pens, and they succeed in taking themselves with a seriousness so exemplary that all trace of native humor disappears. It is true that when a man talks with some charm a good deal of what passes for amusing stuff is in reality mere facetiousness, but there is something more definite at the bottom of the problem. Is it that when they are alone authors think of deep things? Hardly. More likely it is that in company they are stimulated to a certain liveliness of manner and anecdote, and

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that paper gives off no such stimulus. Paper is cold stuff. It does not really do anything toward the making of masterpieces. It even opposes itself to the spontaneous act of creation. How many of us like the act of writing? Very few, except the very young. It is a bore. If we could give off the notions that occur to us (supposing any notions at all occur) we should be happy. But we are not all like Sterne, who caught inspirations as they fell, and supposed that he must in reality secure by his agility many of those intended for other men. Dictation is no good at all, for it interposes a still further barrier between the author and his work, and it is not from dictation that we must expect relief.

If proof of this were needed we have only to regard the work of Henry James. It is well known that the later James novels were all dictated; and I have heard the suggestion made that much of the rambling and repetition of these books was due to the fact that the shorthand typist excusably recorded all the variations which fell from the lips of the master and incorporated them in the vast inextricable skein which we know as a later James novel. No, the cure does not lie here.

Where, then? I have not solved the problem. Yet I can assure those American readers who are curious that many of the young English writers of the day are quite human and amusing beings. I have heard as much good talk from them as from any other body of people known to me. Perhaps a reaction will set in, and they will all follow the lead of Mackenzie, and write as they talk. That would be excellent. Mackenzie's novels will never, in my opinion, be the equal of his talk, which is marvelously amusing; but at least they approximate more nearly to it than do the novels of any other present-day writer to the sort of thing that makes him personal friends. It must be borne in mind that few novelists make friends by their work. Friendship and appreciation are distinct things, as I have discovered to my cost. I must confess that those who do not know me are more complimentary than those who do. But this is a common experience. Friends are captious, and admirers are intolerable in the domestic circle, unless a writer's egotism is supernormal, which, of course, it is extremely liable to be.

I throw out these remarks to show the state of dubiety in which I am left by all the wakeful hours which the problem has produced. All the same, Walpole's new book is an essay in a rather less subdued vein than that of "The Captives", and with Huxley giving us a very unaffected work which resembles his normal conversation, and with various other efforts in the offing, I think we may have seen the last of the very serious young English novel. I saw recently in that excellent paper "The Freeman" a caustic article by Ernest Boyd, in which he announced that American fiction was progressing backward to the days of "Les Soirées de Medan", and it is therefore not untimely for me to throw out a hint that English fiction is getting tired of progressing backward and may now be expected to skip nimbly in the air. Let my remarks not be forgotten. I am not a prophet, but I know what goes on in the minds of a few people, and it seems likely that the seriousness created by the rediscovery of English fiction before the war and its virtual extinction as the result of the war, will give way to a burst of something as nearly approaching animal spirits as we can

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reasonably expect from men who are devoting so much of their time to a very exhausting pursuit, and who therefore, although not in every case, are at times to be suspected of a loss of vital energy.

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Compton Mackenzie, now permanently resident on the island of Herm, is at work upon two books, one of them a light comedy and the other a novel of a more serious type. He is extensively engaged in farming, and has seriously attacked a problem which would discourage a man of less energy. To spend a great part of each day in cultivating the resources of the island, in breeding cattle, and in studying modern farming; and at the same time to keep in touch with life and to write about it, requires abnormal powers of concentration. Yet that is what Mackenzie is doing, and doing very well. He is a perfect laird of the estate, and those who have been to Herm tell me that he is the life and soul of the almost numerous party which is gathered upon the island. It is a strange and fascinating life.

* * * *

Meanwhile D. H. Lawrence, as to the nature of whose last book an extraordinary letter from Lord Russell has just been published in the "New Statesman", is also writing two novels. One of these is nearly finished, and will be published in the autumn under the title of "Aaron's Rod". Lawrence is still, I understand, in Sicily, so that his health is considerably improved. This fact is shown by a recrudescence of energy in the matter of novel writing, for it is not so long since I was bewailing in these very pages a lack of information as to Lawrence's work. To have published three novels in eighteen months suggests admirable fertility, for in the case of Lawrence there can be no question of writing for a market as many novelists are accused of doing. It must be borne in mind that the writing of these three books has been less rapid than the rate of publication would suggest. One of them has certainly been written, in great part, for some time, while "The Lost Girl" was of course begun nearly two years ago.

* * * *

I have been reading the curious new work of Walter de la Mare which has just been issued under the title of "Memoirs of a Midget". This is the book which I mentioned some months ago as of rumored greatness. Much has been heard about it for some time before its publication. Well, in many respects it is not a disappointment, for it is crammed with beauties, and it has had as favorable a reception as could be expected. If it falls short of greatness, the fault may lie in the reader, for if ever there was a book which demanded sensitiveness as great in the reader as in the author, it is "Memoirs of a Midget". One might miss a thousand delicious turns of observation and feeling if one were not alert to receive the full bouquet of Mr. de la Mare's literary manner. This is exquisite. It contains all the scents and sounds of the woodland, both by day and by night; it tells in all sorts of charming passages many secrets of thought and understanding. There is a quaint and dry humor in all sorts of unexpected corners; and little turns of phrase reveal often more than many analytical statements could possibly do. It is the work of a poet, and a poet who, if not in the most robust tradition of our tongue, is in the most delicate and fragrant.

So much for the manner of the book, and for its essential qualities. But what a pity the story, as a story, is not

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better. I mean, that it is not in true harmony with the beauty of the rendering. Perhaps one may say in many cases that here the question of story is of no account; and yet one cannot dismiss the dreary story told by Mr. de la Mare as of no account. It is there, embedded in the pages of charming prose, giving rise to all kinds of delicious apostrophes, and leading to natural descriptions which are unsurpassed in any author's work. It is as though fragrant flowers grew from an unsavory bed. The story is frankly unpleasant and unhuman. And that leads me to ask why poets so often, when they essay the form of fiction, produce matter so little beautiful at heart. Is it that they are not primarily interested in human beings, and that their interest has to be stimulated by something outside normal experience? Is it, perhaps, that we do not understand the world of the poet, and so find it horrible and unreal? Either alternative may be the right one. I do not pretend to be able to judge. My objection in the present case is that I found myself bored by the events of Miss M.'s narrative, turning from her characters as uninteresting and unlovely, and enjoying with happiness that was like a dream all those parts of the book which are the record of natural things. Miss M. is a perfect painter of the beauties of the night, of all the beauties hidden in a wood, of those secret thoughts which very sensitive people store so jealously against the cruder laughter of the world. But she did know a most unpleasant set of friends.

* * * *

The new Hall Caine book is a marvel. The characters live in a world of their own, a world in which the sense of sin and the need for its expiation is an obsession. What a strange old-fashioned world! I was told the other day of a tramway conductor who saw a passenger carrying a copy of the book on the day of publication. Bending enthusiastically, he became amazingly personal. "Is it," he begged, "is it a good one this time?" I doubt whether any other novelist now alive could have provoked such a question in similar circumstances.

* * * *

There is to be a new and complete edition of the works of Max Beerbohm. This is an additional proof that the "Max" vogue is a real and potent thing. The books are all to be bound in boards, I am given to understand, and the color of each book will be different. Each will have a charming paper label. A new collection of drawings will be issued this autumn, made up to a large extent from the pictures exhibited recently at the Leicester Galleries. I am not sure whether "Max's" cartoons will have the same interest for Americans as his books obviously have. In London, as they are of people whose appearance is pretty well known and whose foibles are revealed with agreeable malice, they are recognized with ease as delicate and desirable works: in America, on the other hand, the people caricatured may not be known by sight or even by habit, and the drawings might lose point. Yet one cannot wholly recognize the hold which "Max" has upon the polite public here without getting a grip upon the part his cartoons play in the general estimate of his work. He is a charming "figure", not a man of his works and nothing else; his drawings, his essays, his stories, are only parts of the ensemble, as it were, and the whole is a personality quite, I should say, unique in our time. It would be a good thing if, say, a hundred or a couple of hundred of his

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least parochial cartoons could be exhibited in New York. They lose in reduction and reproduction, and so the full quality of them is impaired in book form.

"Max" is one of those who find Italy more congenial than England as a place of residence, and the number is increasing. Half Cambridge University and its environs was in Italy in the spring, and now there seems to be a recrudescence of travel to the warmth, though why one should leave England for any place but Iceland or Australia in these days, I cannot imagine. For those in delicate health, who need to be able to live in a tranquil and basking climate, the case is different. Nobody could call the English climate stable. All the same, I miss my friends, and am rather resentful of Italy at the moment. I have never been there myself, and the whole of my peevishness may be the result of envy. The country seems good breeding ground for creative work, and that is in its favor. But after all, any place but one's own home seems to be the best place for work. Take the case of Sinclair Lewis, who is busy writing another "Main Street" down at Maidstone, in Kent.

* * * *

Speaking of Sinclair Lewis reminds me that one English publisher is making a determined attempt to popularize in England certain American books of good quality. Nearly all the books he advertises are American. I refer to Jonathan Cape, who has published, to an accompaniment of praise from the London papers, "The Brimming Cup", and who announces "Zell" and others. Personally I am afraid that the English public for such books will be small. But we come back to the very singular point about American books in England, that we seem to read Gene Stratton-Porter in huge numbers, that we coquet feebly with Mrs. Wharton, and that we remain shamefully ignorant of what is being done across the ocean. Good luck to Mr. Cape's enterprise. If it succeeds, another publishing superstition will disappear. I learn that in the picture houses the taste for American films is declining, but one always hears such statements with some reserve, because so many of them have a curious way of reflecting one person's view rather than the view of the majority. Nevertheless there are difficulties in the way of making books descriptive of American domestic life intelligible to English readers, and my own opinion is that we shall not for a long time care for anything but the "twopence colored" variety of American fiction—the story of adventure. This is largely because English writers have no Far West to write about. We have our own provinces, and they are on the whole a drug in the fiction market.

The liking for a "story" is universal. It seems to override all difficulties of scene and setting. It is the novel of character which is so difficult to transplant. Take the Russian novelists—the numbers sold in England would probably turn out to be very small per head of the population. Admirers are everywhere; but they are few and far between. I know a man who seems to be reading the novels of Dostoyevsky unobtrusively and thoroughly. I have actually heard of a man who has just discovered Chekhov for himself, and who thinks and dreams of no author but Chekhov. But these two men are remarkable because they are "sports". The taste for these great Russians is not easily cultivated. The greatest bar to comprehension is the nomenclature. In American books it is the milieu, in

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which English people do not seem able to be interested. English people dislike novels in dialect quite as much. It is a trouble to them. American readers are far more generous of time and patience and understanding with regard to English books.

* * * *

A book in which I am just now taking great interest is the translation of Chekhov's Letters. I have read it before, of course, but it improves on acquaintance. There is such a sanity about Chekhov, such an absence of humbug, that his letters, however dry and satiric, never fail to come off the page with a real flick of vitality. If we had a Chekhov writing now in English we should be worth studying as a literary nation. Take away the Russian setting, and one is up against a natural materialism in the English character which seems to be absent from the Russians; but even so there is no reason why an English author should not penetrate that materialism and come upon what is really there at the heart, which is a humor and character only too rich in material for the novelist's taking. Will not somebody oblige? We do not want an imitation Chekhov. What we need is a sober and delicate-minded intellect to go straight to human nature. Most of us are too dexterous to be delicate, too competent to be profound in our understandings. Yet that seems to me to be the only hope for real creative work in this country.

SIMON PURE

LAUS STELLARUM

By Oscar Davisson

SEPTEMBER night! And morning coming and thin rain
Drifting it down and down upon the deck,
And dew, pearled drop on drop within your hair, and pain
Between us—and through the water like slow flame
Old Sirius the Dog Star, fleck on fleck
Of scatt'ring scarlet! Then the Silence, then the same

Reverberate still runneling of the water,
The splash of schools of bluefish and the grim
Dark chariot movement of the storm clouds! O, Daughter
Of the Stars, lover of the night's bright moonless weather,
What secrets were you whispering when that slim
September dawn slew us and all the stars together?

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LITERARY PORTRAITS: SEVEN

HARVEY O'HIGGINS

HARVEY O'HIGGINS has achieved a style which is durable as well as decorative. He has never been afraid to expose it to the most rough and tumble battles. Even when writing propaganda designed for a news-reading public no more than two stars ahead of him, posterity has remained in the tail of his mind. During the war, for instance, he was summoned to the assistance of George Creel and though carried along like a racing wheelman paced by a motorcycle, O'Higgins managed to keep his style still firmly set upon his head. But there were rhythms other than those of writing which fared worse and several surgeons expressed a desire to look into the patient. Once more style was a savior. Firmly committed to the objective method, O'Higgins declined the offers of the medical men and went to Dr. Edward Hiram Reede, a psychoanalyst. A cure and a volume called "The Secret Springs" were the immediate result. O'Higgins is the literary pioneer of America in adopting the teachings of Freud and his modifiers for the purpose of the study of human character. And yet despite this revolution in the viewpoint of the writer, one characteristic of his mental processes remains unchanged. He still writes objectively. Even his passion for a persuasive hypothesis has not altered his style. None of his many hatreds or even more numerous enthusiasms ever has. Up to and including the boiling point, Harvey O'Higgins remains the great precisian.

Heywood Broun

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Is Marriage Like This?

It was as if he had said, "You can't understand a letter like this. There's nothing in it to understand. And that's just what you can't understand. Look here, you see my head. I'm in there. You can't come in. You don't know how to. I can't tell you how to. Nobody could tell you. And you wouldn't know what to make of it if you did get in."

Exasperating. Insufferable. Insupportable.

MARKO, the whimsical dreamer, finds himself swept into a torrential clash of temperaments. He has married Mabel. She is practical. He is not. Incidentally, he had loved Nona, who understood him. Mabel does not. I wonder whether "If Winter Comes" (Little, Brown) is as brilliant a study of a decent but mistaken marriage as I think it is. Not having sufficient data, let me ask those of you who have. Warn me, if you like. It is penetrating, bubbling with humor, pathos, and genuine excitement. The home background of the war, touched only slightly, was never more skilfully done even in "Mr. Britling". A. S. M. Hutchinson's dialogue sparkles, hits, jumps, races—does practically everything that human talk should. This fact, and the way he sets down the processes of a man's mind, are the things that make this book, give it a rare, almost intoxicating speed. It is nervous and puzzled, without being neurotic. It has some scenes that, minus so crisp a method as Mr. Hutchinson's, might be mere pathos, and others, as when Marko is accused of murder, that would be blatant melodrama. But because it is the novel of an expert craftsman it is vivid and real. If you think that it is a bit slow in getting under way, don't be discouraged; for it will soon carry you by leaps and bounds to a somewhat breathless conclusion. A psychological novel with a visible plot.

Funny Faces!

SEE the funny fa-aces! Cummon intuh the Cr-rystal Pa-alace! See yuhrself as others see yuh! Fat an' slim, one an' all cummon in! Hear the scureams of laughter from the great Ha-all of Mirrors!"

Thus the barker at the county fair lures us to the spectacle of our distorted selves. The quiet mirrors seize upon our dominant characteristic, emphasize it, twist it, until we see ourselves as ridiculous dwarfs or giants, yet indubitably ourselves. "The Mirrors of Washington" (Putnam), with their critical portraits of our great (an ill-chosen word, perhaps) political leaders, are occasionally like this. The gentle affability of Colonel House, the demagoguery of Hiram Johnson, the publicity genius of Hoover: these are seized on and magnified by the mirrors, until the images become stimulating to the eye, yet scarcely faithful. Nevertheless, this anonymous book is an interesting, spicy, and provocative attempt to analyze frankly American politics. It is not so good as the Downing Street variety. We are not so skilled through the ages at poking sophisticated fun at ourselves. There is some adroit writing, though. Not enough, I think, to make us over-curious to learn the name of the author who would court curiosity by his discreet veil. The sketch of Wilson, however true it may be, seems to me

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rather masterful. A fascinating analysis in the tragic mood. The book is already being widely read and discussed, and that is simply another sign of our growing desire to understand ourselves, to turn on the merciless glare of the spotlight.

Messrs. Herford and Æsop

A NEAT book, a gay book, an artistic book, and yet a text-book! "The Herford Æsop" (Ginn) should be as amusing to parents as to their children. Herford has given the old fables a new tang without detracting from their simplicity. What an interesting old gentleman Æsop's lion must have been. Some day I must get Mr. Herford to introduce me to him—and to the mouse, too—only not at the same time. Of the fifty fables (each with at least one illustration) I like best "The Fox and the Lion":

A fox who never, strange to say,
Had seen the King of Beasts, one day
Beheld a Lion. At the sight
He very nearly died of fright.
The second time he met the King
He felt a sort of shivering
Sensation up and down his spine,
But outwardly betrayed no sign.
The third time they met face to face
The fox showed not the slightest trace
Of fear, but bold as anything
Walked up and said, "Good morning, King!"

Rapier and Buskin

IF a man can spin a romantic narrative with color and abandon, why require him to write well? That is, if he doesn't try to write well and fail. I don't think that style, as such, makes much difference to Rafael Sabatini. He creates his characters with dash and gayety. Let him write as badly as he likes, then; for books like "Scaramouche" (Houghton Mifflin), in spite of what we are told in this case of the accuracy of the historical background, are written only to entertain. Scaramouche, the young adventurer, the actor, the playwright, the revolutionist, the lover, is so modern in his moods and so picturesque in his setting of traveling players, fencing-masters, duelers, kings, and court intrigues, that the achievement of keeping us entertained through what is really a very long book, is more his than his creator's! I think that we are going to read costume novels this winter. We are, certainly, if the public turns from a drab realistic effort to a shivering melodrama like this, with as much pleasure as I did. This is a book to be easily read and easily forgotten. That is—all but Scaramouche himself! Scaramouche is a person indeed; and he'll stay in the mind for—oh well!—three months, or perhaps longer.

Understanding Our Poets

THE new edition of Louis Untermeyer's "Modern American Poetry" (Harcourt) is as well selected and arranged as his British one, and that's saying a good deal. In one compact volume he gives us biographical sketches, critical estimates, and excellent selections of American poets from Emily Dickinson to the child Hilda Conkling. Also a preface discussing the whole range. It is neat information, too, and concise. I know of no other way to gain a fairly complete understanding of the subject so frankly and pleasantly. The sketches, in smaller print, are telling, even sometimes amusing. The selected poems are not too usual as to be always familiar. The poets chosen are adequate. There seem to be no glaring omissions, except the names of William Alexander Percy and Leonora Speyer. I should like to have more of Louise Guiney, and of William Vaughn Moody; but I would not sub-

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tract from the others. I was reading the other day an anthology compiled in England and called "An Anthology of Modern Verse". Well, after reading this surprisingly good collection of Louis Untermeyer's I am more sure than ever that the title of that anthology was a gross, if unintentional insult. Not one American was included! Mr. Untermeyer's book is a particularly good work for women's clubs, schools, and universities. Like Mr. Van Doren's "The American Novel" (Macmillan), it furnishes a thoroughly readable and entertaining background for a study course in social group or classroom. If the ladies of Gopher Prairie had followed these two books they could not have merited Carol's scorn.

—*J. F.*

NEGRO CRIMINAL

By Maxwell Bodenheim.

FROM the pensive treachery of my cell
I can hear your mournful yell.
Centuries of pain are pressed
Into one unconscious jest
As your scream disrobes your soul.
The silence of your iron hole
Is hot and stolid, like a guest
Weary of seeing men undressed.
The silence holds an unused bell
That will answer your lunging yell
When your flesh has curled away
Into the burning threshold of a day.
Like the silence, I listen
Because I seek the glisten
Of a hidden humour that strains
Underneath the stumble of all pains.
Brown and wildly clownish shape
Thrown into a cell for rape,
You contain the tortured laugh
Of a pilgrim-imbecile whose staff
Taps against a massive comedy.
Melodrama burlesques itself with free
And stony voice, and wears a row of masks
To hide the strident humour of its tasks.
Melodrama, you, and I,
We are merely tongues that try
To loosen an elusive dream
Into whisper, laugh, and scream.

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

SEE AMERICAN FICTION FIRST!

By Ernest Boyd

AMERICAN critics have said, some with complacency, others more in sorrow than in anger, that a third-class English writer is better than a first-class American, or words to that effect, and the whole theory of American provincialism in letters has rested upon that theory. Whatever element of truth it may have contained years ago, when my ignorance of the intellectual life of this country was as profound as that of most Europeans, in the span of my own first-hand experience of American literature, the theory has been disproved. By some law of compensation America has been productive and progressive in the arts during these last six years of European sterility, and on every side are signs of a genuine flowering of the national spirit. Within less than a decade novelists, poets, and dramatists have sprung into existence to such effect that even in England people are aware of them, and stories of roaring trails or slick business men no longer sum up American literature since Emerson.

The changed situation of America in relation to England is strikingly illustrated by the three new volumes of John Galsworthy, Hugh Walpole, and W. L. George, who certainly cannot be dismissed as unimportant or unrepresentative writers of English fiction. Not one of them has anything to say, or perhaps it would be more accurate to suggest that all three want to say the same thing, and each of them says nothing. It would be easy to name more than three books of American fiction during the past season by new authors which have a real significance and a quality of originality lacking in the work of these practised writers. If the comparison be extended to include American novelists of approximately the same standing in this country as the Englishmen in theirs, then the balance in favor of the former is overwhelming. It was the war in Europe which gave the traveling public the slogan: See America First! The peace in Europe should induce the reading public to see American literature first.

It is precisely the disintegration of the old order after the war which is the theme common to these otherwise entirely dissimilar books. In Mr. Galsworthy's "To Let" the theme is rather incidental, in contrast to its direct treatment by Mr. Walpole and Mr. George. The breaking up of an ancient and apparently impregnable social system forms the background of what is nothing more than a retelling of the story of Romeo and Juliet. The author once more introduces us into the lives of those peculiarly English families of the wealthy, conservative class, whose virtues and idiosyncrasies he knows so well, but in the present case their security and privileges are overshadowed by the threat of a new age. There is a hint of symbolism in the presence of a flighty Frenchwoman in the staid clan of the Forsytes, and the romance of Fleur Forsyte (that hybrid name is significant) with her cousin Jon (not John, be it noted!) represents the rise of a generation which can never share the viewpoint

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of its elders, whose feud, nevertheless, keeps them apart. Mr. Galsworthy's narrative is carried along by the charm of his style, which has all the ease and mellowness of the old England whose malady he has diagnosed with the affection of intelligent discernment. Yet, in the last analysis one feels that this superb instrument has merely been plowing the sands, that the seed of life has not been cast into the exhausted, arid soil. The roughest labor of some pioneering beginner over here has more promise of vitality than this literary landscape gardening.

In "The Thirteen Travellers" Hugh Walpole specifically invites his readers to face with him the problems of a group of typical London figures confronted with a world irrevocably altered by the war. They are all connected in one way or another with a fashionable apartment house in the West End. One is an old gentleman of leisure with limited means, of the sort that flourished in Europe in the days before democratization and depreciated currency. Another is the woman servant who takes the place of a man during the war, and who sees in the peace a return to domestic drudgery. Another is the spoiled son and heir, whose days and nights are given up to compensations for the hardships of the trenches and the loss of an arm, until the pressure of taxes on unearned increment and the high cost of living bring the bewildered squire, his father, to town with the dreadful news that his boy must work. In accordance with the traditions of the popular fictioneers Mr. Walpole solves these problems. The elderly parasite dies to soft music; the distressed servant refuses to keep a returned hero out of his job and is married to him providentially, so that no man can oust her from *that* position; the young man-about-town turns round, with movie-like rapidity, and gladdens the eye as an honest painter in overalls, decorating the front of a house near the scene of his former social triumphs. Needless to say, it was not for such inventions that Henry James singled out Hugh Walpole in a famous essay on the younger English novelists.

W. L. George's Ursula Trent is presented as the young Englishwoman whom four years of war work have cast loose from her family moorings, and who proceeds to "live her life", as the phrase used to go in the defunct era of class-conscious feminism. Here the author is also aware of an important and vital phenomenon in the history of England since 1914, but all that he does with it is to rehash the story of his first novel, "A Bed of Roses". In so doing his commercial judgment is as sound as Mr. Walpole's in deciding to be as "glad" as the sweetest contributor to the American fiction magazines. But a foreigner of the prestige of either Mr. Walpole or Mr. George is expected to display some subtler quality more nearly related to literature. Possibly there are radical experts in advanced thought who will be impressed by the manner in which Ursula Trent emerges from promiscuous amours into eminently bourgeois matrimony. But America can do this sort of stuff just as well, and is doing a great deal more that is better than all three of these volumes. So it is safe, in any case, to suggest that all classes of readers would do well to see American fiction first.

To Let. By John Galsworthy. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Thirteen Travellers. By Hugh Walpole. George H. Doran Company.

Ursula Trent. By W. L. George. Harper and Bros.

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OSCAR WILDE AND "WILLIE HUGHES"

By Richard Le Gallienne

TO the lover of books a literary mystery has an exciting charm almost as great as that of buried treasure. A "lost manuscript" or the piquantly kept secret of the authorship of some provocative masterpiece is as thrilling as an ironbound sea-chest heavy with Spanish doubloons. The lost poems of Sappho, for instance. What an opportunity is still there for the literary adventurer. What a quest for someone sufficiently learned and leisured to hunt among old Greek and Egyptian temples and tombs for the precious scroll, delicate tablets, or fragile papyrus, which would give us whole poems where now we have but a handful of broken lines, a petal here and there out of that lost old rose garden. Doubtless, the Bacon-Shakespeare madness has found so many adherents because of such appeal to the imagination. The mere word *cipher* stirs one's blood—a truly haunted word. Had Bacon himself been a less mean and prosaic figure, and had his adherents been less obviously negligible minds, scant alike in literary breeding and the sense of humor, their rather humdrum delusion might be welcomed as a mystery worth cherishing. As it is, it is about as attractive, say, as Mormonism, the class of heresy, indeed, to which it belongs.

However, there is happily no need to manufacture a Shakespearian mystery, for the mystery of the Sonnets is sufficiently romantic, combining as it does all the elements of a beautiful as well as a complex literary adventure, involving the romance of personality with that of romantic conditions. "With this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart!" Was a picturesque phrase ever further from the truth?—the fact, of course, being that Shakespeare did the precise opposite, indicating that his heart was indeed in the Sonnets, that in them as in a casket he had placed it, but that far from leaving the casket unlocked, or with the key attached, he had on the contrary double and treble locked it—and thrown the key away; leaving us to amuse ourselves by vain endeavors to pick the lock. Some, of course, have believed that they have picked it, but so far they have convinced no one but themselves, and a few disciples; and the mystery of the Sonnets still remains anyone's adventure.

By far the most entertaining "adventure" yet recorded is that of Oscar Wilde in "The Portrait of Mr. W. H.", and, as it now comes to us in its completed form, it brings with it not only the fuller expansion of its theory, but accidental attractions romantically appropriate. Not only have we the mysterious theory of the Sonnets mystery itself, but, in the interval since that theory was first sketched in "Blackwood's Magazine", the very manuscript from which the present volume has been printed has become the subject of a dark and thrilling conspiracy. Here is an extract from Mr. Kennerley's announcement:

> The essay entitled "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." was published in Blackwood's Magazine for July, 1889, and caused a great deal of discussion. Shortly afterwards it became known that Oscar Wilde was working on a larger study of the same subject, and in 1893 it was announced for publication. On the day of Oscar Wilde's arrest, April fifth, 1895, his books were withdrawn from the publishers' shelves and catalogues, and the manuscript of "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." is said to have been returned to Wilde's house, Tite Street, Chelsea, since which date no trace of it had been discovered. It can now be said that since Oscar Wilde completed this manuscript for the printer, it had not been seen by a living person until it was found in July, 1920, and sent to Mitchell Kennerley, who recognized it as indisputably "the lost manuscript", in Wilde's own handwriting.

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All this is delightfully as it should be, most artistically in keeping with the framework of rather unhallowed mystification with which Wilde, in the story itself, whimsically surrounds the transmission of his sinister theory, fatal to all intrusted with it. And still, it will be observed, even after Mr. Kennerley's publication, the mystery of the "Lost MS." still remains. Yes, where has the manuscript been all these intervening years? Who stole it from Wilde's rooms, while the auction was going on, that fatal April day in 1895? or has it been all this time respectably reposing in the perfectly proper keeping of Wilde's legal representatives? Who—but Mr. Kennerley—shall say? He, doubtless, is the happy possessor of the secret; but, I suppose, "wild horses"...etc... So let us turn to "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." itself.

There have been few such brilliant jeux d'esprit, combining as it does in little the wit and whimsicality of Wilde's plays,—notably the nonsense streak of "The Importance of Being Earnest",—his gift of story-telling, the atmosphere of the romance of beauty, and of the romance of learning, which pervaded his prose, as it pervaded his conversation,—of which, indeed, his prose was the echo,—and, added also, his keen intellectual relish in devising, supporting, and decorating the theory itself from his gay multifarious reading.

As to how far he has made out his case for "Willie Hughes", each student of the Sonnets must decide for himself. Holders of rival theories will, of course, remain unconvinced, and go on believing still that William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, or Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, was the "onlie begetter"; or, with Sir Sidney Lee, hold that the much discussed dedication was merely a complimentary acknowledgment made by the publisher "T. T."—Thomas Thorpe—to a certain Mr. William Hall, who had procured the manuscript of "these insuing Sonnets" for him, and so might be called their "begetter", in the sense of having been their "getter"—and that the poet himself had nothing whatsoever to do with the dedication.

Sir Sidney Lee is "a sore decayer" of cherished Shakespearian illusions, and he does his best to strip the Sonnets of all romantic and even personal significance. However, that is not quite within the power even of his erudition. The great passionate lines remain, with their poignant, tragic, haunted music, as of reverberating deep-sea caves of the spirit. They meant something more than "literature", mere experimental sonneteering; and Wilde's guess at what they mean is as likely as another's. That the Sonnets celebrate Shakespeare's passionate friendship for a beautiful young man, an attachment complicated with his love for a beautiful woman—"the dark lady"—cannot be questioned. So much is clear, so much "unlocked". Therefore, why may not that young friend have been one of those handsome boy-actors who played women's parts at Shakespeare's theatre, and wonderfully embodied for him his Rosalind or his Juliet? What more natural than that Shakespeare had him in mind as he wrote the parts he was intended to play. This need not seem so strange to us when we recall the Eltinge theatre. And, though no "Willie Hughes" appears among the recorded names of the boy-actors of the time, that is no proof that an actor so named did not exist. There is much punning on *will* and *hews*, also *hues*, in the Sonnets:

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A man in hew, all *Hews* in his controwling—

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,
And will to boot, and will in over-plus,

and so on. It is hardly likely that the printer printed that *Hews* so capitalized and italicized, by accident. All that must have meant something, and I am inclined to think that the reader of "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." will be more than half persuaded to believe that it meant—Willie Hughes.

The Portrait of Mr. W. H. By Oscar Wilde. Mitchell Kennerley.

AN AMERICAN EPITHETICIAN

By Burton Rascoe

IF I were disposed to credit the theory of reincarnation (and I am, at this moment, so disposed) I should say that Ben Hecht has inherited the soul which Joris-Karl Huysmans relinquished when he commended himself to the Trappists and to God. This notion gains a chimerical credence by a comparison of the physiognomy of the Chicago novelist with any portrait of the great French chronicler of the decadence.

I remember remarking when I first met Hecht a salient resemblance to the familiar Vallotton *masque* of Huysmans. Hecht has the same brachycephalic head, the same narrow, aquiline and spatulate nose, the same scant upper lip spanned by a ramiform mustache, the same arched eyebrows, the same serrated forehead, the same quaint look of whimsical malice. There is in both countenances an aspect at once satyric and spiritual, like that of a faun who has lived indoors. Only in their eyes do they differ: the eyes of Huysmans are fatigued and strained; the eyes of Hecht are alert and gay.

When Hecht talks the hallucination deepens. From his mocking lips comes that swift, deft poniarding of rivals and contemporaries we associate with Huysmans. One hears him say of Hugh Walpole, "an amiable mediocrity"; of Sir Oliver Lodge, "a befuddled old man capitalizing his dotage"; of Carl Sandburg, "an untrained prestidigitator surprised at the rabbits he pulls out of a plug hat". One recalls the crisp Huysmansian conversational dicta: of Lemonnier, "le déménageur"; of Bourget, "le rétameur"; of a woman novelist, "la cardeuse de matelas"; "les explosibles fariboles des romantiques"; "les pastilles mi-sel, mi-sucre de la littérature de Vichy". The epithetical cleverness of Huysmans is legendary. I may be pardoned the eccentricity of preferring that of the American. I seem to detect in Hecht a greater imagistic resourcefulness, a more sprightly caprice of adjectives and some justice.

Finally, to play with my notion before dismissing it, let me observe that there is in Hecht the Huysmansian contempt for the stupid and mediocre, the Huysmansian passion for setting off explosives under dead syntax and desuete word-groupings, the Frenchman's delight in the exotic, fantastic, and bizarre. There are these differences: Huysmans had the benefit of a richer cultural tradition and a more varied critical equipment; Hecht has a keener sense of form, a better documented disillusion, and a more corrosive cynicism. In Huysmans there is always a suggestion of faith; in Hecht there is no faith save in himself, and even in this there are elements and times of doubt. Hecht is a Huysmans who has seen the parade of petty human passions in the police court and these same petty human passions decked out as ideals in war. He is

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amused by it and yet his amusement is a wry jocularity, tinged with a healthy regret that it is not otherwise that men should live. He sees life as an amusing spectacle simply for the reason that for so long he has failed to find it an edifying one.

It is for this reason that his superb novel "Erik Dorn", while it challenges consideration, will not generally be reviewed, I suspect, on its æsthetic merits. So patent is the personality behind the work that the man will eclipse, for some, the literary projection of himself. Thus we find Francis Hackett nodding in the course of a well-written review: "A style like Mr. Hecht's....I find its novelty as tiresome as too many fuchsia growths. It is effective, but 409 pages is like a month of bismuth breakfasts....It is, I believe, an actual straining for impressiveness, for accent, for effect." This last is a curious statement, for it records as an idiosyncratic belief subject to doubt, something which is patently obvious and implies that this something is reprehensible. Of course Hecht is straining for impressiveness, for accent, for effect, but what is wrong about that? Is not Mr. Hackett straining for effect when he speaks of *fuchsia growths* and *bismuth breakfasts?* All writing, considered as an art, is an actual straining for impressiveness, for accent, for effect. The means may be simplicity and directness, but it may also be involution, antithesis, paradox, any of the numerous media appropriate to the idea expressed. I shall later reveal that Hecht's style in this particular novel is splendidly in keeping with the theme of the book. Meanwhile it is well to point out that the novelty Mr. Hackett finds tiresome does not extend, as he says, throughout the 409 pages of the novel. There are passages of poise and tranquillity, of simplicity, ease, and directness. To characterize as an uninterrupted stridency, as does Mr. Hackett, a novel wherein passages dealing with war and revolution are depicted with words appropriate to the theme, is to deride the Brahms Third Symphony as a noisy and strident piece because of a remembered crescendo.

So, too, does Mr. Mencken, by an unwonted dereliction, describe as disorderly a book wherein disorder in brilliant passages is expressed in language that is inevitable if the impression is to be conveyed. Nor is it the critic's function to regret, as Mr. Hackett regrets with some animus, that Erik Dorn is an egoist, or to regret, as Mr. Macy regrets with tentative distaste, that Dorn is hard and brittle. For the unescapable fact is that Mr. Hecht set himself to the task of depicting an egoist, and not an altruist, a passionate young egoist, moreover, who has not lost his hardness and brittleness through wisdom and experience.

The novel is as carefully planned as an orchestral suite. Its opening is quiet and peaceful, an adagio of prose until the stormy Dorn is introduced. The development is into aspiration, adventure, disillusion, and defeat, with a recapitulation and coda softening into the tranquil mood with which the book began. It has the rhythmic variation of life itself, the cyclic progression from desire to satiety, from storm to quiet, with a thirst for beauty which remains insatiate. The irony is implicit in the suavely contrived recurrence to the identical setting of the original scene, with an indication that summer is gone and winter is come, wars and passion have died—"Outside the window the snow-covered buildings stood in the dark

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like a skeleton world, like patterns in black and white."

"Erik Dorn" is conventional enough in theme, and in character motivation. It has its prototype in "Prometheus Bound" and in "Peer Gynt", in "Sanine", "The 'Genius'", "The Cords of Vanity", "The Man of Promise", "Martin Schüler", "Maurice Guest", and a host of others. It is the familiar theme of the artist type aspiring for something beyond the petty demands of a biological existence.

But Dorn is, in the jargon of the psychopathologists, a victim of dementia præcox katatonia; he is incapable of reacting with the normal human emotion to any common stimulus. He lives with a curious detachment from life, functioning brilliantly as a journalist in a purely mechanical way. He is an absolute skeptic, utterly without convictions of any sort, a complete sophist, interested in ideas as playthings, fascinated by words, and in love with phrases. Each new experience means to him only a readjustment of adjectives; life is a series of essays in literary composition; doctrines, creeds, and ideals are futile attempts to foist wall-mottoes upon life, the essence of which is novelty and change.

It is to be questioned whether Hecht has sustained Dorn throughout as he has postulated him in the beginning. There is a dubious cast to the explanation of Dorn's deception as arising from his disinclination to cause his wife sorrow; for had he been as emotionally unresponsive as he is elsewhere depicted, it is difficult to believe that consideration for Anna would have balked his will. It is a duality in Hecht's own makeup which is responsible for this failure to realize Dorn perfectly. It is the same duality which makes his account of the German revolution a brilliant but contradictory and meaningless thing. He is divided between an intellectual contempt for the shibboleths and activities of the revolutionists and an instinctive sympathy with the plight of the proletarian.

Few novelists now writing have the eyes to see the strings behind life's marionettes that Hecht has, and few have his ability to picture those strings in a paragraph. Anna and Von Stinnes, Lockwood (in a few pages) and Hazlitt are realized with dexterous strokes. The portrait of Hazlitt may very well hang in that same gallery wherein Homais is the masterpiece. And again one will not easily forget the courtroom scene and its aftermath, the newspaper office, the pages devoted to the outbreak of the war, the running commentaries on the catastrophe and peace. For Hecht among all the young men of the post-war generation of American novelists has, it seems to me, the most opulent equipment in the matter of intelligence, experience, and imaginative power. The verbal patterns, the pungently evocative word-combinations, the strange richness of metaphor in "Erik Dorn" cause it, if for no other reason, to stand out as a distinct new model in the mechanics of expression. Hecht is our first great epithetician.

Erik Dorn. By Ben Hecht. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THE PLYMOUTH PAGEANT

By Norreys Jephson O' Conor

THE writer of a pageant is confronted by the most difficult problem of dramatic technique: he must tell a story, usually covering a period of years, through a form wherein the pictorial element is uppermost, yet if

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the pictorial effects are overemphasized the result is but a series of tableaux. Moreover, lacking the acoustics of the theatre, since most pageants are given out of doors, he cannot rely upon dialogue. By skilful invention of pantomime, through illustrative action, he must develop his theme.

In a foreword, printed in the program of the Pilgrim Tercentenary Pageant, "The Pilgrim Spirit", the author and producer, Professor George Pierce Baker of Harvard, expresses his realization of the limitations of pageantry and of his subject in particular:

> At first sight the size of the Pageant Field would seem to forbid the spoken word, and to call only for pantomime, processionings, and brilliant color from masses of people. On the other hand, the story of the Pilgrims is intimate, needing to be told close at hand, and, as far as possible, in their own words....Many people know what the Pilgrims did in England, in Holland, at Plymouth in its earlier days, but why they did it, guided by what, unified as a group by what, these matters have not been so clear.

To solve these difficulties of subject-matter and place, which to many would have been insurmountable, the Pilgrim Tercentenary Commission could have chosen no Pageant Master of more learning, taste, experience, and skill, than Professor Baker. Through his experimental theatre in Cambridge, he has grown familiar with every art of the stage, and in Plymouth he gathered round him a group of workers whose cooperation was of unusual excellence.

Foremost among these was Munroe Pevear, whose lighting was the outstanding feature of the production. When the opening scene broke from the night, there was no effect of theatrical lighting; sand glowed and water sparkled, seemingly, in warm sunlight, as the Norse galley, with its brilliant wall of locked shields, sailed toward the cowering, terrified Red Men on the shore. The scene of the Pestilence of 1618, suggested in part by Mr. Gilbert's incidental music, was made unforgetable by the unearthly green light that blasted the deserted plain.

The actors, 1,200 of them, all from Plymouth and the neighboring towns of Duxbury, Kingston, Marshfield, in many instances bore names that would have been strange in Old England, but they showed how pageant-giving makes for community spirit in New England. Their zeal and earnestness gave the performance great dignity, almost solemnity. One heard often the comment, "It is like Oberammergau". So careful had been the training of tone and diction that in spite of the enormous size of the field —400 feet wide and 450 deep—the words were clearly audible to an audience of 5,000. Unusually impressive was the Voice from the Rock. The band of eighty pieces and chorus of as many voices also represented "local talent" exclusively, as well as sincere effort. No account of the pageant could fail to record the devotion of the designers and makers of costumes, whose labors must have been suggestive of the old-time sewing bee.

But skilful production could not compensate for absence of drama in the book; as in other pageants, the spectacular scenes were the only ones that really carried; the pictorial overshadowed the dramatic. When James the First made his royal progress and thwarted or put off petitioning Puritans; when the Dutch cities of Charity united in gay and triumphal march; when, in conventionally symbolic finale, the nations of the earth pranced proudly together with much waving of flags, the spectators were enthusiastic. The small scenes evoked little emotion.

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The text shows the central idea of "The Pilgrim Spirit" to be the Pilgrims' determination to preserve religious liberty and popular government. But though there is unity of idea, dramatic unity is absent. Save in a few scenes, notably that of the Opposition, in the Second Episode, the pageant lacks that suspense which seizes and keeps attention. There is no central figure, as in Mr. Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln", to bind together loosely connected incidents. The dialogue has the defect of its virtue in being a literal or slightly altered transcription of the Pilgrims' own words. Professor Baker has leaned too heavily upon his familiarity with the history and writings of the Pilgrims, has allowed his historical knowledge to overbalance his feeling for the theatre, and has kept much that is undramatic. This is particularly true in the scene of the Signing of the Compact. The best portions of the book are the free verse Prologue and a corresponding passage at the close of the Third Episode.

The verse contributed by Josephine Preston Peabody, Hermann Hagedorn, Edwin Arlington Robinson, and Robert Frost adds little to the reputation of these already distinguished poets.

What would an Elizabethan dramatist have done with so unpromising a subject as the Pilgrims? He would undoubtedly have used facts freely, possibly have contrived a story with suspense, perhaps have given unity to his pageant by creating, or selecting from a monotonous group, one character whose fortunes the spectators could follow with interest, and in doing this he might have given as accurate a conception of the Pilgrim Spirit as that so elaborately fashioned by Professor Baker.

The reaction of a spectator is summed up in the conclusion of a letter: "One admired technique and earnest purpose, but was left unmoved, like Barrie's unfortunate princess, whose disconsolate physician, after testing her heart, had always to report, 'Cold, quite cold!' And that may quite as well have been the fault of the princess as of the physician."

One feature of the pageant may be especially commended in these days of international friction and unrest—the emphasis placed upon the interdependence of the two great English-speaking peoples. "The path of the 'Mayflower' must forever be kept free."

The Pilgrim Spirit. Written and produced by George P. Baker for the Pilgrim Tercentenary Commission of Massachusetts. Marshall Jones Co.

STATESMAN, FINANCIER, PHILOSOPHER

By Rex Hunter

WHEN I played football for Canterbury College in New Zealand a dark, wiry student played on the three-quarter line with me. One day I missed him from his accustomed place and made inquiries. "Oh," said the undergraduate to whom I spoke, "didn't you know? He's gone to Oxford as a Rhodes scholar."

Years passed. I was in Chicago, reporting the trial of a group of Socialists charged with obstructing the draft. A name was called and a young red-headed man rose from the back of the courtroom and took the witness chair. He had been brought from a cell at Leavenworth as a witness for the defense. He was dressed in a khaki shirt, incredibly shapeless trousers, and grotesque shoes. With this garb his delicate face and hands made a strange contrast. After a few pre-

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liminary questions the attorney for the defense went on: "You were educated at Oxford?" "I was." "You went there as a Rhodes scholar?" "Yes."

Soon afterward I heard that the former three-quarter back had become an eminent K. C. in England. Cecil Rhodes meanwhile was sleeping peacefully on the hill called the View of the World in Africa. Yet his shadow cast itself across the lives of these two young men who went such different ways.

Rhodes was wildly hated and wildly loved. To old President Kruger he was "Apollyon, a financier, and the foul fiend himself". Yet Alfred Beit, a Jew from Hamburg and the shrewdest financier of his time in South Africa, spent himself in the service of the British imperialist. Those who hated Rhodes could not stop him any more than they could stop a charging elephant. Everything about the man was large, as his biographer points out. He had enormous virtues and enormous faults. He was one of those forceful men who must find outlet for their energy in great projects. With all his material success he was often pathetic. Material success alone could not satisfy him. He brooded on the universe and sought a meaning. In the silence of African nights he probed for some satisfying philosophy. There were moments when what he saw inclined him to believe that there was no meaning in things; the rain fell alike upon the just and the unjust, and perhaps man's birth was as insignificant as his death.

From this conclusion, however, Rhodes turned aside shudderingly. He could not stomach it. It is interesting to note that he was influenced by Winwood Reade's book "The Martyrdom of Man", in which the brilliant author, after examining into man's history and the history of all religions, counseled his readers to forget their dreams of immortality as vain. Rhodes seized on the positive side of this philosophy. He deduced from it the necessity of improving conditions on this planet. He had to believe in something, and he took for his gods the British Empire, Queen Victoria, and the Anglo-Saxon race. The program which he drew up for the extension of British rule throughout the world has been practically all accomplished with one important exception, "the ultimate recovery of the United States as an integral part of the British Empire".

Mr. Williams, by painting in shadows as well as high lights, has produced a good biography.

Cecil Rhodes. By Basil Williams. Henry Holt and Co.

A BRITISH SPOON RIVER

By Charles Hanson Towne

IF a young journalist were starting out on his career, his managing editor could do him no greater service than to put this volume into his hands and say, "When you can write like this, you will know you have arrived." For succinctness, a stripping-to-the-bone effect, a naked, stark style, the book has few equals. I can think of only one writer who achieves such instant pictures, who so fearlessly shows up the foibles and weaknesses of poor human beings. I mean Edgar Lee Masters. This is a veritable "Spoon River" of living dead men—a sharp, incisive, truth-compelling set of portraits that bare men's souls, and cause the reader to suffer vicariously at the pitiless revelations.

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Who wrote it? That is what everyone has been asking these many weeks; and the answer is yet to come. "A Gentleman with a Duster" has simply tried to rub off some of the grime from those mirrors of Downing Street; and in these days of labor troubles he has done a fine job. I should call him a servant of the public who had the welfare of his master at heart. He has not glossed things over. One gets a close-up of every man, from Lloyd George to Lord Leverhulme; and just as in the movies the veins of the most beautiful eyes are so magnified that they look like maps of the Himalayas, so here the faults and frailties of these men, however they may have tried to conceal them by clever make-up, are revealed for all to see.

It has been the present reviewer's fortune to see and talk to four of the baker's dozen thus analyzed and dissected. He knows, therefore, how vivid is the pen picture of Lloyd George—that massive lion's head on the dwarfish body, tapering down to legs that are hardly legs at all; that light in the eyes, that twinkle which means so much—or so little—as the Prime Minister desires. And he knows the Peter Pan appearance of Northcliffe, the stateliness of Balfour (the coldness, too) and the ruddy, sound-apple face of the late Lord Fisher.

Has Lloyd George read what is said of him in this book? Let him do so, and be a changed man ever after. He is literally torn to bits by the claws of a few hundred words; yet the anonymous writer is just when he wishes to be. He sums George up scathingly in this flashing sentence: "His conduct in the last months of the war and during the election of 1918 was not only unworthy of his position but marked him definitely as a small man. He won the election, but he lost the world."

Of Lord Fisher, for whom he had an easily discerned admiration, he writes of those perilous days when Mr. Churchill hesitated in a crisis. "What does it matter," he reports Lord Fisher as saying, "whom you offend?—the fate of England depends on you. Does it matter if they shoot you, or hang you, or send you to the Tower, so long as England is saved?" And one inevitably thinks of Kipling's noble line, written in the early days of the war, "Who dies, if England live?"

For Lord Haldane the author has a deep sympathy; and those difficult hours when he was accused of pro-Germanism are spoken of with tenderness, and the story of the sure vindication of a truly great man is told with fire and fervor. He wishes that Haldane had not accepted his martyrdom with such unearthly poise. To the younger men of his time, he seemed lacking in the humanities—a man who could thus brush away his bitterest accusers. But now, with some perspective, the world can see how wise Haldane was to keep his temper, and not allow his vilifiers, in colloquial English, to "get his goat".

No more amazing volume has come to my desk in many months. It will rest on the shelves of our public libraries, and in our homes, when other books of our time are discarded and forgotten. A memorable piece of work; a daring exposé of men who are worth exposing.

The Mirrors of Downing Street. By A Gentleman with a Duster. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

HALL CAINE has done it again. His latest novel "The Master of Man" (Lippincott) still deals with (we have the publisher's word for it) "the eternal forces of life". The scene is laid in the Isle of Man and the story concerns the temporary ignoble passion of the son of the great man of the island, its tragic consequences, and true love faithful in disaster. The plot is complicated and worked out with considerable skill. The characters are all puppets and there is nauseating talk of sin-stained men and pure women. The logic and morality is puerile, while crude instincts are patently pandered to. In fact the whole book is all the more to be regretted for being so readably written.

At the age of twenty-one Henry James began his career as a book reviewer, and some of his anonymous book reviews, never heretofore printed in book form, are now collected in "Notes and Reviews" (Dunster House). A good deal of the subject-matter has proved hopelessly ephemeral, though some good material fell to his hand: novels by Hugo, George Eliot, Trollope, and Mrs. Gaskell. Trollope, despite the author's sneaking fancy for him, irritates him, and in a review of much humor Hugo's "Les Travailleurs de la Mer" is frankly laughed at. The chief defect of the articles as criticism is that the writer, forecasting his later obsession, interests himself more in technical literary faults and virtues, particularly the former, than in the books as a whole. But aside from this defect, considering the writer's youth, the reviews are amazingly good reading. They show ability to reason from the general to the particular—the mark of a first-rate critic.

M. la Rose in a sympathetic preface writes, "James...was never a popular author and even the most devout Jacobite must admit...that he was not a 'great' one." We admit no such thing. If humor and imagination (immortal pair!) and sympathy in conjunction with a style of infinite subtlety and taste do not, in their divine infusion, as in "The Portrait of a Lady", make for a "greatness", if not a grandeur, we can name no "great" novel. And these reviews give more than a hint of the novelist's future—the same elevation of thought, the impatience at shabby personalities, the recognition of the beauty of the innocent and the bad taste, not to say downright wickedness, of the sentimental.

The dramatic skill to create a swift climax and a setting to emphasize the suspense, marks the eleven stories of the underworld which Richard Washburn Child has collected in "The Black Velvet" (Dutton). There is a good deal of similarity in the tales, especially in regard to structure—most of them reveal some arresting quality of character upon which the situation is made to turn. The author understands the value of unity and has the knack of giving verity to a unique circumstance by convincing portrayal of attending commonplaceness. The stories seem to reflect an intimate

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knowledge of the ways of crooks and will satisfy readers who enjoy a thriller of the better sort.

His usual average in chuckles to the page is maintained by Irvin S. Cobb in "A Plea for Old Cap Collier" (Doran). But, for all the humor, Cobb pleads a case seriously. To those who may some day prescribe literary tonic for adolescent minds, he addresses a defense of the dime novel. Such a mind, he says, should be counseled thus: "Read these volumes openly. Never mind the crude style in which most of them are written. It can't be any worse than the stilted and artificial style in which your school reader is written." That is the argument of Cobb's plea; the humor resists summarization.

In a brief and graphic account of the horrors of starvation in Central Europe, "It Might Have Happened to You" (Lane), Coningsby Dawson emphasizes the fact that the greatest sufferers have not been responsible for their condition. The tragedy might have happened to you or me and will reach us eventually unless relief is given to the victims of the war. Thousands of people dying slowly amid the most revolting surroundings provide a miasma of despair, disease, and crime which must infect the whole world.

Why does Central Europe starve? The author finds a fundamental cause in the rearrangement of the political map by the Peace terms. These, he declares, have built walls across most of the old travel routes, have given ancient hostilities a new means of venting their animosities, have destroyed confidence and dislocated the entire system of transport. The people want work and prefer employment to charity, but they are helpless until new economic development has put them on their feet. They are without tools, clothing, or food, yet the author sees a spirit of courage in peasants and aristocrats alike which will eventually triumph if the present crisis can be weathered. The organization of the Free Youth of Germany into an idealistic society to oppose war and autocracy seems to Mr. Dawson a promising omen. The humane reader can hardly fail to be moved by the challenging appeal of this little volume.

When, early in the book, the heroine's body is found frozen in a lake, her friends cut it out and lean it against the side of a house where all may—and do—look through ice and silk nightgown to worship. The qualities of this figure evidently gave Rupert Hughes the title for his latest book, "Beauty" (Harper). The reader may suffer vicarious shocks at the exposure until he reads later that it was customary for the girl to appear before a less select public in costume no more concealing. In fact, much of the book is devoted to asserting that scant clothing on dance floor and beach is in no way a contributing factor to unconventional behavior. The story is another Hughes magazine serial published in book form.

Before reading ten pages of "Howards-End" by E. M. Forster (Knopf) we had unconditionally surrendered to its charm of diction, its inimitable humor, and its generous humanity. Amid authors overwhelmed by the dust of Main Streets, the stench of stock yards, and the noise of machine shops—dust and stench and noise seemingly too much for style or temper—we suddenly find gracious-

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ness, untypified human beings, and faith in personality whether of houses or people. Indeed, the personality of a house dominates the book. Howards-End, a converted farm house, loved by a dying woman, gradually envelopes the story until finally all the strident materialists and muddle-headed idealists with the by-products of their elbow-rubbing are gathered to its breast.

The book follows the fortunes of the Wilcox family, successful, visionless, save for Mrs. Wilcox who dies early and without much stir but who, in her love for Howards-End, achieves immortality. Into the Wilcox lives come two sisters, Helen and Margaret Schlegel, each believing in personality "because personal relations are the important things for ever and ever, and not this outer life of telegrams and anger". Between the Wilcoxes of this world and the Schlegels there must always be warfare; here the victory of the latter is beautiful because it has not annihilated, but absorbed, the former.

John Freeman undoubtedly has his audience, else there would seem to be no reason in the publication of a collected edition of his poems under the title "Poems New and Old" (Harcourt, Brace). But this particular reviewer is not one of Mr. Freeman's admirers. The poet has a sense of beauty and feeling, and a very evident brilliance of thought and suggestion, but the final impression gained of him is well summarized in one of Mr. Freeman's poems, "Perversities":

> Now come,
> And I that moment will forget you.
> Sit here
> And in your eyes I shall not see you.
> Speak, speak
> That I no more may hear your music.
> Into my arms,
> Till I've forgotten I ever met you.

"Real Life" by Henry Kitchell Webster (Bobbs-Merrill) is consciously misnamed. The book is a roaring farce of the scenario type with the heroine a screen star and what, through most of the story, passes for the hero, "the greatest violinist in the world". Easy and amusing reading it is, but its humor is pretty obvious and at times lacking in spontaneity. Rather patently a hammock-in-the-shade and lemonade piece of work.

As its preface states, "Poems of the English Race" edited by Raymond MacDonald Alden (Scribner) is for readers of about eighteen years of age. And it suits its purpose well. Here are old favorites, poems with which we have mere nodding acquaintance, and ones totally unfamiliar, all more or less chronologically arranged in two sections: Narrative Poetry, and Lyrical or Reflective Poetry. Concise notes at the head of each poem (when necessary) point out its unusual significance or metrical intricacies. Excellent footnotes explain departures from modern grammatical or etymological usage. The general "get-up" and appearance of the volume lends grace to an artistic arrangement of material.

"The Seeds of Enchantment" (Doubleday, Page) is very disappointing. At the outset the tale, supposedly founded on the lore of Indo China, promises to be a thriller. If Gilbert Frankau had kept it strictly within the bounds of an adventure story it might have been, but he so often retards the progress of the mystery to acclaim the virtues of militarism, capitalism, (which surely are out of place in a Chinese mystery story), and virility generally, that the reader grows impatient.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in August in the public libraries in the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. Galusha the Magnificent	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
4. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
5. Growth of the Soil	*Knut Hamsun*	KNOPF
6. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
2. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
3. Galusha the Magnificent	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
4. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
5. The Sisters-in-Law	*Gertrude Atherton*	STOKES
6. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
4. Growth of the Soil	*Knut Hamsun*	KNOPF
5. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
6. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
3. Miss Lulu Bett	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON
4. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF
5. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
6. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY

WESTERN STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3. Moon-Calf	*Floyd Dell*	KNOPF
4. Growth of the Soil	*Knut Hamsun*	KNOPF
5. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
6. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
3. Alice Adams	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY
4. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
5. Growth of the Soil	*Knut Hamsun*	KNOPF
6. Galusha the Magnificent	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
3.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
4.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
5.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
6.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
2.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
3.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
5.	The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
6.	The Next War	*Will Irwin*	DUTTON

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
4.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
5.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	The Peace Negotiations	*Robert Lansing*	HOUGHTON

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
5.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM

WESTERN STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
6.	Back to Methuselah	*Bernard Shaw*	BRENTANO

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
6.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

An Italian Letter

THERE is no use denying the decay of Italian literature, and it can safely be stated that this period began with the present century. Upon Carducci's death only D'Annunzio and Pascoli were left to deal with a situation which, during and after the Great War, went rapidly from bad to worse. D'Annunzio, in several ways, and more so Pascoli, had been declining for some time; both were quite incapable of creating a new tradition. Italian fiction was degenerating into honest commercialism, Giuseppe Verga having left off writing for some little time, and Alfredo Oriani fallen a victim to his own troubled unequal, however lavish, style. And the reactions of the literary group of the "Voce" of Florence and the clamorous movement of the futurists passed so rapidly into eclipse as to become a typical phenomenon. On the other hand Benedetto Croce's æsthetic theories concerning the absence of any human feeling in a work of art, resulted naturally in a lack of true artistic value in mere literature. Today this decay has reached its highest pitch. Poetry is belittled by impressionist sensations and has become prim and formal; fiction has become commonplace or worse.

Undoubtedly the Great War, having changed a very small reading public into a huge one, is mainly responsible for this lack of good taste. People eagerly sought the latest book as they had formerly sought the latest fashion from abroad. The selling of books became a trade; publishing houses became anonymous companies who offered high prices, not to the more serious writers but to the "quick-selling" ones. Writers themselves were writing trash to cater to the popular taste. Time was when one "created"—or tried to create—a book of some literary value; nowadays the book or novel is patched together anyhow, the author even reworking some old manuscript in order to bring his book up to the required two hundred and fifty or three hundred pages. And if the publishers used to be cautious, they are now, as a rule, quite satisfied with a "big-hit" title, a flashy or alluring cover which catches the public eye. In other words, the term *business*—in its most despicable sense—exactly applies to the present situation: a dishonest business in which one does not admit one's own mediocrity and in which every essence of humanity is lacking, and every true touch with life.

There is no want of reactions to this lack of taste by men who were influenced more or less—and often in a negative manner—by Croce's theories which tend to isolate a work of art from any true human feeling on the artist's part and from surrounding humanity; but these men too often fail to touch vital feelings. And just as the reaction which set in fifteen years ago against D'Annunzio's ineffable style, turned into a quest after simple terms of expression, opposing decline to decline, thus nowadays to this immoral and slouchy style is opposed a cold and moral manner of writing which is solely literary. On one side we have the classical reactions of the Roman group of the "Ronda" who seek after Leopardi's and Manzoni's purity

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of style and terms of expression, a movement which is solely literary and represents the aping of Shakespearian masterpieces. What this group is driving at, at least up to the present, I cannot possibly say. The writers of the "Ronda" are not in touch in any way with humanity; and although they are the most typical outcome of Croce's theories in a lyrical or literary field, yet through prejudice they are against him, "anticrocian". They live aloof from life, attempting a double personality in which the human side cannot be discerned, and only the literary side is in evidence.

On the other hand men working against this present immorality—which is triumphant—are making an attempt toward returning to Christianity. It was enough for Giovanni Papini to announce that he was writing a "Storia di Cristo" (now issued by the publisher Vallecchi of Florence) and that he had returned to faith; a chorus of voices was at once raised throughout the peninsula, toward Christianity. Those who had been writing God's name with a small letter began to write it with a capital letter, and so on. I have no right to doubt Papini's conversion; but his state of mind reflected in the spiritual unrest of his books for fifteen years leads one to believe that this also is a mere literary venture. At any rate it is nothing but a literary venture on the part of most of these new Christians lately revealed, because no crisis has up to this been given to a critic to deal with, however much he may try. Christianity has become in this instance nothing but a form of cant, an unreal literary reaction against that immorality which was also solely a literary venture. Too much fuss has been made, too much noise; there is too much superficialness about it all, for one to be able to take it seriously. Above all there is lacking what our elders called humility. Which leads me to believe that instead of a reaction against the decay of morality, this return to Christianity is nothing but the latest craze of the very same decay. In my next letter we will inquire into this crisis and into the reaction it is producing.

GEROLAMO LAZZERI

French Notes

EQUIVALENTS to the monthly meetings of the American Poetry Society do not exist in Paris. Poets are too individualistic, and people are less trained in peaceful public debates. Poetic manifestations before large audiences are either academic, or youthfully aggressive and purposely riotous. There is "Les Annales" and there is "Dada". And then, of course, the reading of unpublished works by their authors before such chosen audiences as gather in "La Maison des Amis des Livres", where so much of the actual vitality of French letters of today has concentrated. But no vote is taken...

Just now we hear of an initiative which might interest our friends of Gramercy Park, and perhaps suggest a following in this country. The poet Jules Romains and his friend Georges Chennevière announce their purpose of giving, next winter, a regular course in poetic technique. According to M. Romains:

> Wherever there is a definite trade or art, there is a system of technical means and processes which can survive and improve only if transmitted through teaching....One of us will give a theoretical course, that is, will explain in detail the resources and rules of modern versification. The other will direct the practice, that is, he will propose exercises of

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prosody, showing how the rules are applied, how a line, a stanza, a poem is built....We shall not allude to what makes the very substance of poetry, to the problems of inspiration, of æsthetic tendency, of literary doctrine, nor of style, properly speaking. That is an entirely different field. Our audience will be free to poetize on the life of Confucius or on the art of growing lettuce....We have no idea how our enterprise will be received, but I dare to be affirmative on one point: when the year will be over, *not one* who has been with us will leave us convinced of having learned nothing.

The attempt seems to be the first of its kind, at least in France. It could not start under better auspices, as Romains is not only a poet ("Le Voyage des Amants", his last book, is worthy of "La Vie Unanime" and of "Europe"), but also a thorough connoisseur of the technical resources, both classical and modern, of his art.

Why shouldn't Witter Bynner follow the example?

Several reprints of Jean de Tinan's books have appeared. Tinan died young and left great promises unfulfilled. He had caught and fixed the spirit of a very peculiar period—the "Fin-de-Siècle" epoch— and the nervous, sentimental, and blasé feelings of the youths who "dissipated" their twenty-fifth year around 1895. It was the time of Symbolism at its decay, of the Wagner influence at its height, and it preceded the revival of athleticism, outdoor life, travel, and the wave of Anglo-Saxon principles which marked the opening of the twentieth century in France.

The author of "Aimienne" and "Penses-tu Réussir" had given chronicles to the "Mercure de France", which are now gathered under the title of "Noctambulismes". Jean de Tinan is a subtle guide to a Paris life that has since been very much transformed. He stands now as a precursor of the recent craze for circus-play, electric flashes, the rows of translucid bottles containing exotic alcohols, the jazzing negro and the pale clown. He is a link between Jules Laforgue and Jean Cocteau.

PIERRE DE LANUX

Women

EVE was the contemporary of Adam. Beginning with Eve, women have been reputed to be loquacious, imaginative, emotional, endowed with the keenest of instincts, veritable sages at times by sheer intuition and most ambitious withal. In his essay on women and language, written twenty years ago, Remy de Gourmont contended that it is not lexicographers, teachers, and grammarians who make languages but women. And women, de Gourmont said, not merely make the languages, they preserve and conserve them and pass them on to succeeding generations. The same authority argued, with a rare display of Gallic audacity, that all art is a lie, and that women lie more than men.

How is it then that women were slow about acquiring citizenship in the republic of letters? Concerning the part played in this by an ill-adjusted society, let the sociologist speak. Concerning women's actual ability, we may well fall back on Remy de Gourmont again. He wrote:

Among so many excellent women writers none has ever created a language in the sense of which this is said of Ronsard, of Montaigne, of Châteaubriand, or of Victor Hugo. Woman repeats well, often better than man, what was said before. But she has little capacity for verbal innovation.

De Gourmont never read Gertrude Atherton at her wordiest. His theories, however, are in the main tenable.

With the exception of Sappho in Greece, who lived 2,500 years ago, it was not until the eighteenth century that women began to write. Hrotsvith

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von Gandersheim did to be sure pen, quill, or stencil a half dozen Latin comedies in the tenth century, but her creations fall under the head of letters rather than literature. Marie de France wrote on the purgatory of St. Patrick in the thirteenth century and thereby gave graduate students in comparative literature an unremunerative job.

Then came Fanny Burney's "Evelina" (1778), the pre-Defoe romances of Mrs. Behn and Mrs. Manley, the letters and critiques of the two irrepressible Madames, de Sévigné and de Staël, and the then worshiped lyrics of Anna Luise Karsch (1772-91) in Germany. In fine, women were slow about getting a start. But they are making up for it today wherever paper, publishers, and people can be found. Let us pass a few of their most recent creations in review.

At the battle of Liége, the Belgians were commanded by Monsieur le Général Leman, the Germans by Herr General Lemmich. Both are now dead. And, as was quite fitting under the circumstances, Louise Ganshof van der Meersch has written the life of General Leman.

The biography is manifestly a difficult literary genre. To make the hero stand out in correct and adequate proportions requires imagination and the creative as well as the critical instinct. General Leman was first of all a man and a student; he was a soldier only when the occasion arose. To depict a contemporary of this type with sobriety, in an artistic manner, and yet with due regard for historical accuracy, was a hard task—which Mme. van der Meersch seems to have done with ease. A man would have dwelt too long on military strategy. This woman was more interested in human ingenuity. But until only recently, as time flies, society would have detected an element of absurdity in the assumption on the part of a woman that she was fitted to write the life of a general in the armies.

Moreover, in our solicitude lest we fail to do justice to the memory of Dante in this the six hundredth anniversary of his death, we have forgotten that it is the nine hundredth anniversary for St. Olav, contemporary and rival of Canute, King of England, and himself once King of all the Norways. Sigrid Undset is writing a series of articles for "Aftenposten" of Christiania on St. Olav with the idea of eventually expanding them into a book.

It is a colossal step, a far cry, from "Jenny" to Olav. But Sigrid Undset approaches her *pensum* unintimidated. It is a delicious story she is telling. Here is one digressive paragraph:

> Mediæval philosophy was transcendental. It frequently happens with transcendentalism that abstract conceptions become concrete. The greatest world event during the Middle Ages was that the word became flesh and dwelt among us. In the mediæval way of thinking words and ideas became flesh and realities—just as in this day of materialism meat and realities become words and concepts. The average man today for example, regards "society" as a sort of mystic affair, far more mystical in truth than the "society of the saints" struck people as being a thousand years ago. There is more mysticism today in deflated currency and bacteriology than there was in demonology in the days of St. Olav.

A woman who would have written this a short while ago would have brought down upon herself the charge of being a red-stocking.

The opposite in many ways of Sigrid Undset is Marie Lenéru, whose diary is now being published in the "Revue de France". Any day's note is interesting, though like the average of diaries, there were some days on which apparently nothing happened to Marie Lenéru. Here is the entry of May 17, 1900:

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How could I write a novel, never having dreamed of one for myself? The heroine of an idyl will always be a stranger to me. I cannot get down to work, and I have a scruple about getting outside of myself. I always have the feeling that the more serious, absorbing and interesting things are taking place within me.

That explains why her quite intimate diary is now of sufficient merit to be published serially in a great magazine.

Going down to Italy, it would be advantageous, if only for the sake of variety, for this country to become better acquainted with the works of Mme. Serao (Signora Eduardo Scarfoglio). Born in Greece in 1856, her father a political refugee and her mother a Greek, she came to Rome where she founded, with her husband, a daily paper called the "Corriere di Roma". It was short-lived, but it gave her an introduction to journalism that has manifestly stood her in good stead ever since. In 1881, she took up creative writing; book after book has followed, a few of which have been translated.

She published recently a work entitled "Preghiere" (Prayers). Unlike her work of more remote date on *savoir-vivre*, this is a *savoir-prier*. When in school, Mme. Serao was noted for her rhetorical ability. Chamfort said once to Mirabeau: "Facility is a good thing, unless you abuse it." Mme. Serao has made too great use, if she has not actually abused, her rhetorical facility in this volume of "prayers", written at St. Moritz in Switzerland in the summer of 1920, and now brought out at Milan. But even so, it is a type of literature to which the American public is unaccustomed.

The volume consists of a series of orations or "talks" loosely knit together and spoken by the most variegated ensemble of characters brought together, in this story, from all walks of life. And yet, despite the thread of piety that runs through what she has done, Mme. Serao did her best, or earliest work, when skeptical naturalism was triumphant, when a novel by Zola was awaited with the regularity of the seasons. But she has always respected the Catholic religion. In her "Conquest of Rome" (1885), she had Donna Angelica say: "It is so vulgar to be an atheist. Religion is beautiful and good and worth much more than the things of which the world approves." Mme. Serao's is an isolated voice in European literature.

It is in Germany however that women have made the greatest progress as writers. Since the founding of the Empire fifty years ago, they have been conquering one field after another until at present it can be said without hesitation that, with the exception of the drama, they are the equal of the men. What this means to the civilization of a country is not easy to state in a few words.

On July 10 the University of Jena, in one of the most impressive ceremonies ever held, conferred the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, *honoris causa*, on Frau Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche. The date was chosen because it was her seventy-fifth birthday; the degree was given her because without her efforts, indefatigable and reaching back to 1890, the world would have today only the haziest sort of idea as to the genesis of Nietzsche's works, while many of them would have been lost forever. Nietzsche's writings fill at present eighteen volumes, aside from a half dozen volumes of letters. But he never wrote a book; he wrote paragraphs. It was his sister who gathered up this loose material and gave it coherency.

Her life has been all the more heroic because of her sorrows. She married

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Dr. Bernhard Förster and they went to Paraguay, where they became influential members of South American society. Förster died in 1889, the same year in which Nietzsche suffered his mental breakdown. His widow found herself the sole dependable relative of her mindless brother. He died in 1900. She has since edited four editions of his works, collected his letters, and is at present engaged on the fifth and probably definitive Nietzsche edition. As to the family itself, it becomes extinct with her death. If the world ever has another Nietzsche it will be because the courts grant someone the privilege of rechristening himself with that outstanding patronymic.

Some time ago, Etta Federn began bringing out a series of historical novels. I call attention especially to her "Elise Lensing". The titular heroine was the poor but not wholly uncultivated woman of Hamburg who gave Hebbel her all; she worked for him after the fashion of a duly appointed maid, loved him, "presented" him with a child, and stood by him even after he had married the rich and gifted actress, Christine Enghaus. There are more historical novels, dramas, and poems in German than in any other literature.

Etta Federn has now come out with an article in which she recommends that the Germans read historical fiction. She emphasizes the value of the works of Luise von François, contends that Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach's "Der Kreisphysikus" (it treats of the Polish uprising of 1846) is more apposite today than ever, feels that "Der Werwolf" by Herman Löns (Löns was killed in action early in the war) has a special message for the German people at present, calls attention to the extreme value of Charles de Coster's "Flemish Legends", and says every German should now read Flaubert's "Salâmmbo". She mentions, too, a great many other works of historical fiction of merit and meaning. Her argument is not to be despised; for it is in historical fiction that women writers can do their best work: they are so patient when it comes to looking something up; and to tell a story with embellishments is second nature to them.

But there stands France. The trouble is, she stands now about where other countries stood at the beginning of the century. With all her ideals of beauty and theories of art, France has done very little for her women. And what French women are doing today in letters is negligible. Encouraged they have not been. The academies have frowned on them, individuals have written books to prove that their sphere of influence is not literature. But probably there is light ahead. For Marie-Louise Le Verrier is just finishing an excellent life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton—in whose home the first American woman's rights convention was held. That was in 1848. France has her first convention yet to hold.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

News from Germany

AS the froth and fury of the revolutionary youth of Germany begin to subside into calmer channels, we are able to discern the kind of stream that is flowing beneath. There is no denying that on the whole the effervescence in the revolutionary brew was short-lived. Some of the earnest-minded enthusiasts are now making desperate efforts to free themselves of the tag, rag, and bobtail which merely pretended to revolutionary *Sturm und Drang* because it was the fashion.

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Walter Hasenclever, we saw, was one of the first to make fun of the intellectual revolutionary profiteers and democrats of a day. He is now followed by the brilliant young Austrian poet, Franz Werfel.

Among Werfel's earlier lyrical and semi-dramatic productions, perhaps his most important work was a rendering into German of the "Trojan Women" of Euripides. In this sombrely beautiful version of the grim old tragedy (produced in Berlin, strangely enough, during the most tragic days of war) Franz Werfel performed a service to German literature similar to that rendered to English literature by Gilbert Murray. Werfel's new work, however, has little of the old Greek spirit. It is a fantastic drama with a Faust-like hero, owing much to Strindberg's influence, restless, somewhat obscure, and charged with today. Its production on the stage, which has not yet happened even here, would be an interesting and probably successful experiment. The "magic trilogy", called "Spiegel Mensch" (The Man of the Mirror), is published by Kurt Wolff in Munich.

The cruder idea of Mephistopheles, the personal devil, which Goethe took over from the original mediæval Faust-legend, is replaced by Werfel with the original inspiration of creating a baser self out of the hero's reflection in the mirror. Thamal shoots into the glass and his tempter is released. The Jekyll and Hyde drama introduces within a frame of magical happenings many a savagely ironical or bitterly satirical fling at contemporary fads and follies. In style and expression, Werfel's new book of ringing couplets is fully up to the level of his former work. Its dramatic quality and the wit of its philosophic mockery make it a work of great importance.

Erna Grautoff, the talented wife of the well-known art critic, Dr. Otto Grautoff, has just published a novel which promises to be the woman's book of the year. She has burdened it with the alarming title "Uta Curetis", which sounds like a Latin motto but is really the name of the heroine. The novel is a woman's book in the best sense. We see the soul development of Uta and half a dozen of her companions from innocent, speculative schoolgirls to women whom life has broken or rounded into fulfilment. The book is long, but this gradual psychological development, not lacking in exciting crises, holds the reader's interest on every page. Much wise philosophy of life and many clever sayings are packed into this finely feminine book. It is very plain that Erna Grautoff loves and admires her Uta. Yet she succeeds in making her human and winning our hearts for her creation. Uta Curetis in spite of all temptations and trials remains—a rather rare thing in continental fiction—a pure, noble, and happy woman.

Literary Germany is full of preparations for the Dante Festival, to be celebrated by a ceremonial in the National Opera House. The best-known Dante expert in Germany, which is practically to say, in the world, Dr. Carl Federn, is bringing out a new edition de luxe of his book on Dante, which enjoys the honor of being a standard work in Italy on the subject. Dr. Federn has just published a small popular book on Dante, and has the art, not common to many experts, of seizing the essential and the humanly necessary out of his vast store of Dante lore and compressing into thirty-eight pages a brilliant little survey of Dante and his age.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

EMORY Halloway's "Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman", to be published this fall, has many entertaining incidents of the poet's life, as well as much hitherto scarcely available material. The first poem in the book is highly amusing. It gives one a feeling of courage when confronted by some young man who says, "After reading my poem do you think that I should go on writing?" Now we can say, "It's a miserable poem; but look at Whitman!" "Our Future Lot", Mr. Halloway says, was

from the *Long Island Democrat* (Jamaica, L. I.), October 31, 1838, into which it had been copied, in whole or in part, "from the *Long Islander.*" This latter paper was the first that Whitman edited. It was a weekly issued at the little town of Huntington near Whitman's birthplace, beginning in June, 1838. On this sheet Whitman did practically all the work, being editor, reporter, printer, publisher, and news-carrier all in one. This fact, taken with the obvious Whitman manner of treatment both as to theme and as to style, seems to establish his authorship, although the poem was not signed in the *Democrat.*

The poem is of eight verses. We quote four only:

This breast which now alternate burns
With flashing hope, and gloomy fear,
Where beats a heart that knows the hue
Which aching bosoms wear;

This curious frame of human mold,
Where craving wants unceasing play—
The troubled heart and wondrous form
Must both alike decay.

The cold wet earth will close around
Dull senseless limbs, and ashy face,
But where, O Nature! where will be
My mind's abiding place?

Will it ev'n live? For though its light
Must shine till from the body torn;
Then, when the oil of life is spent,
Still shall the taper burn?

Among the prose fragments, we find the following, which is the first paragraph from a newspaper story called, "The Habitants of Hotels", published

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in "The Daily Crescent" in 1848. Times change.

There is no actual need of a man's travelling around the globe in order to find out a few of the principles of human nature. The observer needn't even go to a college or a primary school, but if he is determined to supply himself with knowledge, let him visit the precincts of some of our first-rate, tip [-top] barrooms on Saturday or Sunday night.

The drawings are from a Whitman notebook, of the Pfaffian days, probably from his own pencil, and, undoubtedly, caricatures of himself.

Imagine the joy of encountering the now famous Dr. Traprock, discoverer of the exotic Filbert Islands, in his hunting costume, with his fascinating South Sea Island bride upon his arm. She had but just put by her flowing seaweed garments for something more chaste in the form of a silk skilfully painted with a design of scarlet passion flowers intertwined with the leafy vines of that terrible and sensuous *nabiscus* plant of which the brilliant Traprock writes so feelingly.

"Ha!" said Traprock, giving that gesture so peculiar to sailor men, and known as a hitch, "You would interview me?"

We nodded, modestly enough; for it was unnerving, this mere fact of finding ourselves in the presence of a man who had actually visited the home of hooch, had touched the tender wings of the *fatuliva* bird, and had stridden up and down the deck of the "Kawa", dreaming what dreams of new lands of liquid delights to conquer. Now that we have seen him, seen the curious twist of his beard, heard the rumble of his splendid deep bass voice, and melted under the gaze of his fair bride's eyes, we cannot wait to pierce beneath the brilliant orange covers of his book, "The Cruise of the Kawa". What other South Sea adventurer can compare with this gallant gentleman, a courtier of the old school as was demonstrated by his staid way of bowing from the waist; and yet, be it known, broad enough to find happiness in the peculiarly new pleasures of the mysterious Filberts.

"Were the Filbert Islands much different from Connecticut?" we asked, knowing that there was a little white-walled cottage in New England which the sunburned, red-nosed captain called HOME.

"Ah", said he, "ah! one cannot collect dew fish in the dawn on my dear home coast; but oh! you have no idea how great a joy it was to teach my new little helpmate the good old smell of a good old clam!"

"And have they no clams in the Filberts?" we asked.

"Clams?" said he, and his reddish countenance paled with disdain. "Clams? No clam could exist in the same temperature as the terrible *wak-wak*, that super sea monster, one of which my gallant Captain Triplett actually rode through the seas, until the poor beast, wearied by such unaccustomed weight, turned his expansive side to receive the welcome point of my own weapon, especially sharpened for the purpose."

Space will not allow us to relate the many stories told us by the great discoverer: of the storm that blew them from the tourist-infested regions of Polynesia to the gentle air of the beautiful Filberts, of the *compass* plant, and the flowing *hoopa* bowl, of tantalizing tattooing and decimating dancing. But, above all, it is the personality of the man Traprock that gleams through his conversation and through the pages of his book—a little man in stature, but what of that? Was not Napoleon of such build? It takes real ability to conquer so strange a people as the Filbertines—and with

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what?—even as he conquered the Gossip Shop, by the swift gleam of an eye that compels obeisance to a charm that is at once infectious and intoxicating.

The English still show a curiosity concerning this American Language of ours. I wonder if they have read Johnny Weaver's book. John, by the way, has come back to town, after a hurried trip to visit Rockwell Kent in Vermont. We wonder just what book he is going to pick to demolish with his criticism in the Brooklyn "Eagle". Well, at any rate, here is a letter which appeared recently in the Literary Supplement of the London "Times":

"AMERICAN SLANG"

Sir,—Discussing "American Slang" in last week's *Literary Supplement*, Miss Katherine Metcalf Roof tells us that "a 'hick' is Western slang for a rustic," and indicates that it is of recent introduction. As has been proved in so many other instances, this new American slang is in fact a survival of Old English. In Steele's comedy, *The Funeral: or Grief-a-la-Mode* (Act. IV., Scene 3), Lord Hardy says to one of his ragged regiment: "Richard Bumpkin! Ha! A perfect country hick. How came you, friend, to be a soldier?" The Oxford Dictionary gives two other quotations which show the word to have been in common use about 1700. It is always wise to consult the "N.E.D." before assuming any word or phrase to be an Americanism. Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM ARCHER.

First nights in warm weather do not always appeal to the imagination. At "Dulcy" we saw everyone in the world and his wife, except the one man we wanted to see, and that was F.P.A. Alexander Woollcott back in town again. Neysa McMein there—was she with Mr. Woollcott or Arthur Samuels? We forget, or perhaps we didn't know. People change seats so rapidly. At "Swords", Zoe Akins was in a box, and we saw her talking to at least one of her five leading ladies of the season; for Ethel Barrymore will start on the road with "Déclassée" presently. Mary Nash, of course, to see her husband act. F.P.A. back from his vacation. Herbert Swope of the "World", looking pleased and comfortable, having acquired Messrs. Adams, Broun, and Lippmann for his sheet—quite a journalistic coup, we think. Mr. Pulitzer's paper won't know itself. Burton Rascoe, the critic, and Tom Powers, complaining that he finds himself rehearsing for musical comedy; Donn Byrne, with the first copy of "Messer Marco Polo" tucked under his arm, and his wife, more charming than ever; Charles Hanson Towne, just back from England; Mr. and Mrs. Louis Untermeyer returned from Maine; Meade Minnigerode, author of "The Big Year", in the same rich lobby of the new National Theatre with Heywood Broun who recently took so much space to criticize his book, Mrs. Brock Pemberton in an orange cape, etc., etc. It was not like this at the opening of the National Winter Garden on Houston Street. Here is the true home of the burlesque queen, and programs which bear the advertisement, "The Beautiful Ladies of the Chorus eat at So and So's café". One watches the audience even more closely than the antics of the Yiddish comedians. A motley crowd, heavy-jawed and loose-lipped. Every chorus lady has her bouquet. There are even large set pieces for the principals. This is almost as picturesque as the Italian light opera to which we once went, in the Bowery Theatre where Modjeska once played. There are, too, we understand, Italian puppet shows in New York City, though we've never discovered one.

Not long ago, between hours spent on his new novel, "Fiddler's Green", we took a sail with Donn Byrne.

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Much impressed by the seamanship of Mr. Byrne and his charming secretary, whose middle name is Bruce, and who is indubitably descended from Robert (everything about the Byrnes is either Scotch or Irish except the twins, who are simply a leaf from Michelangelo's note book). We sat with Mrs. Byrne and went humbly where told, enjoying the Sound, and thinking it a great tragedy that the lady had destroyed the first draft of a new play. We told her, however, that we would buy her a new pen, which we didn't, and we saw her buy a quire of manuscript paper, so that we know there *will* be a new play, a quiet little comedy of Irish life. Donn Byrne is writing his best now, we think. "Messer Marco Polo" is delightful, as much as we have read of it in "The Century", and he is putting the same effort into "Fiddler's Green". Under, or just thirty, he has a chance to do fine things; for he has been successful along popular lines, and now can turn to other things, still young enough to escape what popular style he may have adopted, and with so much vitality that it is impossible to visualize him as doing anything else but turning out novels or taking some form of strenuous exercise. Or reading—we forgot reading. He is a voracious reader.

Donn Byrne

Katharine Hopkins Chapman still defies H. L. Mencken's opinion of southern literature by her gathering of delightful notes on the people who write in her neighborhood. This month she writes from Citronelle. Wasn't there something of that sort one used to keep off mosquitoes in other days?

The little town of Citronelle, Alabama is rich in literary traditions. On the grounds of the Hotel Citronelle is the Amélie Rives Cottage, where the Princess Troubetzkoy wrote "The Quick or the Dead" and other of her famous novels. The cottage was headquarters for the officials of the Mobile and Ohio railroad in the 'eighties when Colonel Rives, the father of the writer, was vice-president of the system. Two miles south of this spot is the famous estate locally known as "Mann's Folly", built by Charles Mann, brother of Colonel William D'Alton Mann, late editor of "Town Topics". A quarter section of woodland was laid out in a chain of Italian lakes and rare shrubs and trees imported to beautify the grounds. A palatial stable for the housing of blooded racers was built. The grounds alone, it is said, cost 30,000 dollars—and that when land and labor were a tenth of what they are now. A handsome home was started, but when it was half completed, Charles Mann, who was said to have taken a flier on 'change, went broke. He died shortly after this and the property passed into the hands of the "Town Topics" editor, but was never completed. During the construction of the place the sleepy little southern town was treated to kaleidoscopic views of famous news writers, sportsmen, sob sisters—*off* the sob job, however!—and other colorful persons that made up the entourage of Colonel Mann. It has never forgotten the meteoric appearance and disappearance of the Manns, and the estate, neglected and forlorn, is referred to by the townspeople as "Mann's Folly".

Other interesting, if less spectacular writer folk come and go at Citronelle. Anthony M. Rud, magazine and fiction writer ("Saturday Evening Post" et al.), after spending the winter and spring there, drove through to Chicago for the summer—and so far as the thermometer counts, had better have stayed south! While in this section Mr. Rud found much to interest him in the way of story material. One of the scenes of his forthcoming tales, he states, will be laid between Citronelle and Vinegar Bend, while another will be just this side of Mobile. He found the negro character rich in story suggestion and will use it to a large extent.

Another writer of note who winters at Citronelle is Charles H. Sylvester of Chicago, who compiled the famous eleven volume juvenile series, "Journeys Through Bookland", besides doing a number of text-books. Mr. Sylvester has a cottage at the winter resort and is accompanied each season by his sister. He is immensely popular with the local Boy Scout troop, taking them on hikes, offering prizes, and otherwise stimulating the love of outdoors in the youngsters.

Frances O. J. Gaither of Mobile, whose pag-

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eant, "The Shadow of the Builder", was presented at the University of Virginia Centennial in June, is now in New York City attending Columbia for special work. Mrs. Gaither wrote the pageant at her summer home in Fairhope, on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. Fairhope, you know, is one—if not the only—single tax colony that survived the second-summer teething. It may be said to have cut its wisdom-teeth, for the experiment—rationally modified—celebrated its majority several years since and must be nearing the quarter-century mark. Many famous writers have sojourned there, among them—well, I am trying to think of the fellow who wrote "The Jungle" but the only Sinclair that I can think of is that Sinclair Lewis whose "Main Street" threatens to belittle every small town in America. Upton Sinclair! He sought the pine-magnolia-salt breezes of Fairhope to disinfect his nostrils of the slaughter-house scents.

The in-town roads are now filled with returning novelists, critics, et al. You can see them any day on the turnpike, with their red bandana handkerchiefs on their shoulders, coming back toward the Great White Way, and the benches of Washington Square. John Black has returned from the MacDowell Colony, with stories of the tremendous energy (literary) of Maxwell Bodenheim who, it seems, has turned out a volume of poetry, several plays, and a novel, within the past months. William Rose Benét, too, was there, Padraic Colum, and others. John has nearly finished a novel, too. It is of the war. Paul Rosenfeld, back from Europe, where he has left behind Sherwood Anderson, tells of Anderson's first glimpse of the Place du Carrousel near the Louvre. He saw Anderson rubbing his eyes, and thought he must have acquired a cinder, in memory of Chicago days. Not so; Mr. Anderson was weeping, and he continued to weep through lunch; for, said he, "It is so much more beautiful than anything I had imagined."

In New Orleans, they are to have something new in the Bookshop. Rosalie Nixon, a delightful lady who recently came on to New York to purchase books, tells us that they have taken over an age-old building in the old French quarter, and that there is to be a combination teashop, bookshop, antique furniture shop, and lingerie shop, all operating under the same roof. Back of them is a delightful courtyard which, she promises all those who come to visit her, will be filled with charming southern belles. The house was the home of Morphy, the great chess player, and a tablet to his memory is to be dedicated at the opening of the shops some time in October. The Archbishop, we believe, is to come in order to give his blessing to the enterprise. While the teashop and the lingerie shop have rooms of their own, the books are to be scattered around among the antiques, so that the atmosphere of the place will be quite in keeping with the historical associations of the part of the town where it is located. We suggested that the most popular fiction be kept among the laces; but Mrs. Nixon seemed to feel that the suggestion, while novel, was irrelevant.

Earl Carroll has an idea, as well as the foundations laid for his new theatre. He would have a Green Room in his home of the drama, where literature, art, and music would touch genial elbows with the stage. He has even gone so far as to have the room included in his plans for the theatre. Carroll is affable, talented, enthusiastic, and seems to have a genius for securing a good backing. It is rumored that he will do most engaging things with his new venture. We see no reason why he shouldn't collect an interesting crowd in his Green Room, provided always, of course, that he doesn't try too hard to collect it. Carroll still lives in his roof-top bungalow

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overlooking the heart of the theatrical district. This is a warm enough day, so we are again moved to envy as we remember the roof garden and fountain and other coolnesses in the way of refreshments.

Cosmo Hamilton

Cosmo Hamilton doesn't know how closely we've observed him. We met him just once; but we've seen him innumerable times, on trains going to Long Island, and he's never dressed alike twice, and he's always impeccable. We've decided that he's oh! so much better a guide for good clothes than "Vanity Fair" or Kuppenheimer catalogues. Since last January he's been working very hard on a novel of English political life to be called "The Rustle of Silk", and his play "The Silver Fox", with William Faversham, had its première on Labor Day in New York City. During the summer, for his home colony of Huntington, he cast off the rôle of writer of sparkling dialogues in the mouths of the so-called smart set and became, for the nonce, a poet. He wrote a prologue, it seems, for a festival in aid of the Near East Relief, which was given at the Rosemary Theatre at Huntington. Carroll MacComas, still playing Lulu, in Zona Gale's play, spoke the lines as follows:

Here, in this most gracious place,
Where come, with singing stars for music
And cold sweet moon in royal state,
The spirits of our well-remembered dead
To strut the stage once more,
Enacting those old plays of England's bard
Wherein the joy, the passion and the pain of life
Live on forever in immortal verse,
We, their humble comrades, come tonight
Faithful to the Art they served so well,
To wing imagination's magic flight
And lead your fancy into Fairyland;
To touch the strings of that old Harp
That wake kind echoes in the human soul;
To speak again the ever-ringing words
Of Masters who have died but live,
And join our services with those of yours
To that sweet cause,—inspired by Him
Whose cross still throws its shadow on this earth,—
Charity. . . greatest of these.

Walter Yust, now sojourning in New Orleans, sends us the following enthusiastic note:

If you want to see John McClure, author of "Airs and Ballads" and poet authentic of the south, to best advantage, perhaps you'd better see him as bookseller in his little dusty old bookshop on picturesque Royal Street, New Orleans. You'll see him there to best advantage, because you'll usually find his gentle wife there with him. And what "Jack" McClure lacks in "good looks", his wife makes up, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Or you might see him as newspaper man, bending over the copy desk nights in the office of the daily "Times-Picayune"; or talking as editor animatedly with editors Friend and Thompson over the merits of a new contrib by Jeannette Marks or Arthur Symons, in the office of "The Double-Dealer". But wherever you see him, with his soft, quite ordinary felt hat and his smelly pipe, I'm afraid you won't recognize in him the poet. He looks—maybe they are the earmarks of a poet after all—like a regular, garden-variety, everyday sort of man who has a mind and a body which enjoy life, which live gratefully. He took a 2,000 mile "hike" once, just to see *more* things. And, as he says, being only twenty-eight years old, he's a swashbuckler at heart even if he doesn't look like one.

Perhaps, some day, the world will know him as one of the few poets who was the better poet because he could never take his work too seriously. "I enjoyed writing it," is the most he'll say for any of his charming pieces. "I'd tear my songs up if singing didn't matter so little anyway," he has written. And he wants for his epitaph, you know, if he must have one, nothing large, nothing impressive, but just a word about his being a man "who was somewhat overcome by the beauty of the world".

Answers for our literary questions must be submitted by October twentieth. State whether or not it was necessary to look up the answer. The best three replies will receive a book prize. (Any book in "The Editor Recommends".) There were many

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correct answers to the August questions. Naturally, the first three to arrive are chosen for the award. Curiously enough, all chose the same book, Edmund Gosse's "Books on the Table", which shows what a very bookish circle our contestants must be. The prize-winners are: Florence L. Munn of Los Angeles, California; Ada Burke of Charleston, South Carolina; and Mrs. A. E. Kraybill of Asbury Park, New Jersey. They are well scattered over the country now; but, you see, New Jersey still persists. The new questions were sent us by Alys Gordon, also of New Jersey, and are as follows:

1. Who peeled and ate three Ripstone pippins?
2. Who wrote "Send us the men who do the work for which they draw the wage!"?
3. What novel has a description of a peculiar librarian?
4. What author gives a brief and satirical account of the Peace Conference?
5. What American cartoon was the means of bringing a political offender to justice?
6. Who said, "Training is everything, the peach was once a bitter almond, cauliflower is nothing but a cabbage with a college education"?
7. In what book does the heroine say, "The board money's in the ginger jar and our consciences is free"?

Here are the answers to the September questions:

1. The Reverend Patrick Brontë, father of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne.
2. Amy Lowell's "Can Grande's Castle" centres around the romantic figures of Lady Hamilton and Nelson. Its form is "polyphonic prose".
3. Elbert Hubbard's "Message to Garcia" should be an effective stimulus for a boy lacking in resourcefulness.
4. A nineteenth century apotheosis suffers a collapse in Lytton Strachey's "Queen Victoria".
5. Sir Boyle Roche, in the Irish Parliament, said: "Why should we legislate for posterity? —What has posterity ever done for us!"
6. Robert Burns and Mrs. Dunlop
   Abelard and Heloïse
   Balzac and Madame Hanska
   Nelson and Lady Hamilton
   Pope and Lady Mary Montagu
   Botticelli and Simonetta
   Swift and Hester Johnson ("Stella")
   Chopin and George Sand
7. Mrs. Proudie appears in "Barchester Towers" as well as in other of Trollope's novels; Miss Matty, in Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford"; Lily Bart is the heroine of Mrs. Wharton's "The House of Mirth"; Clem Sypher, "the friend of humanity", the optimistic but disillusioned salve advertiser in Locke's "Septimus"; Countess Gruffanuff, the governess to the Princess Angelica in Thackeray's "The Rose and the Ring"; "Emily"—a hen, one of the most memorable characters in Owen Wister's "The Virginian"; Mr. Salteena, the hero of Daisy Ashford's "The Young Visiters"; Nellie Bly, a ballet girl in Grundy and Solomon's operetta "The Vicar of Bray"; Mr. Puff, an exponent of the art of puffing in Sheridan's "The Critic"; Clara Middleton, one of the chief characters in Meredith's "The Egoist"; Prince Florestan, the hero of Beaconsfield's novel "Endymion", supposed to be a caricature of the Emperor Napoleon III; "The Midge", the heroine of Bunner's story of that name.

The BOOKMAN intimate family isn't very large; but we hope that it includes Mary Roberts Rinehart. Why shouldn't it? Her son occupies one of our offices, and swings along many of our affairs toward their ultimate destinies, and her granddaughter is also the granddaughter of Mr. Doran. Just before she was taken ill, we had a fine talk with her. At that time she was planning a mountain horseback trip through the west. We can remember no one recently who was such a picture of youth, vitality, and energy. She, who has shot tarpons at night in Panama, lived among the Indians, traveled on the western war front, done this, done that, was planning then to rest for a while, then start in writing again, and a different type of book. She had not long since finished "The Breaking Point", and, much to our disappointment, told us that she didn't believe she would

Mary Roberts Rinehart

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write more detective stories. We have never forgotten our first thrill at "The Circular Staircase". Some day we are going to write an article on her books, the way she writes, and what she hopes to write. Now we simply want to tell her—for we were not one of the several hundreds who sent flowers when she was sick—that we are very happy that she has recovered sufficiently to be ranching it in Wyoming and thinking not at all of writing, books, or bookmen. Stanley Rinehart, by the way, whose writing ability is shown in our circulation letters now, has inherited the gift. He doesn't like to admit it; but he sits down occasionally in the middle of the night and turns out a story. Never a word of it, however, will he show. Says it's too revealing. Some day we shall use force, or perhaps his mother will put in a word in our editorial favor. We think that she has much influence. She should. We have seldom met so vivid, so electric, so keen a woman, one who was so ready for whatever opportunities, grim or gay, life offered, and who swung into them with so sportsmanlike a manner.

From Louisville, Anna Blanche McGill writes us of further southern activities:

With a Kentucky cardinal singing at one window and a thrush at the other on a delectable countryside, Hortense Flexner King, author of "Clouds and Cobblestones" and several plays staged by the Little Theatres, has been poetizing during the summer. Lyric results will appear in the autumn and winter magazines. "The North American Review" has accepted a sonnet of special literary interest. Entitled "The Street of Death", it is dedicated to the gifted poet and critic, the late Margaret Steele Anderson, author of "The Flame in the Wind", "The Story of Modern Art", former literary editor of the Louisville "Evening Post".

Mrs. King's drama, "The Faun", consistently classic yet subtly modern, appeared in a recent number of the Drama League magazine. "Voices", played by the Stuart Walker company, is included in "Representative One-Act Plays", compiled by Margaret G. Mayorga.

Still another art besides that of poetry and play writing is practised beneath the Flexner-King roof tree. The poet's talented young husband, Wyncie King, is cartoonist of the Louisville "Herald"—a gentle and chivalrous artist withal, yet addicted to capturing with wicked verisimilitude the idiosyncrasies of local and visiting celebrities.

Various literary enterprises have recently been making A. Carter Goodloe, author of "At the Foot of the Rockies", "Star-Gazers", etc., divide her citizenship between New York and Louisville. Lively interest has been quickened by her series of tales of two cities, her Old Louisville-Old New York stories, which "Scribner's Magazine" has been publishing. The September number has an intriguing one of the series—"The Talisman", a Chinese princess and a young American being the dramatis personæ.

In addition to her reputation for deftly handled fiction, Miss Goodloe has an enviable prestige among that erudite, if sometimes insufficiently honored, tribe—the translators. A frequent sojourner in France, Miss Goodloe translated the articles by Captain X (Raymond Recouly) published in "Scribner's".

In a spasm of nerves, we peered down the back stairs. Something low and black and curly was crawling up them. We whistled to it, but it didn't bark and nothing wagged. We stood our ground manfully, too cowardly to show cowardice. The curly black ball lifted and turned into the head of the Italian gardener's son creeping up the back way in Frances Hodgson Burnett's villa at Plandome. He was coming up on all fours, pretending to be a bear. The hope in his heart was that Mrs. Burnett would tell him a fairy story, all made up for him—just one little boy—and the greatest children's story-teller in the world! He was quite casual about it. It was our first week-end with Mrs. Burnett, and he left us gasping. We know better now. Such things happen in Plandome Park. But he didn't get his fairy story just then, for Mrs. Burnett was on her own little strip of beach. We found her there after a long search but she couldn't shake hands even with us—

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though we don't care much what we touch—because her hands were covered with mud. She was making a clay elephant. It was a very bad elephant. She was making it for Verity. Verity is Mrs. Burnett's granddaughter. We are notoriously bad at guessing feminine ages, but Verity must be four—and if you close your eyes when you are looking at her you have to open them again before you can believe she is as pretty as you thought. Mrs. Burnett has the granddaughter she deserves—we almost said *earned.*

The elephant got worse and worse. Verity dug her toes into the moist sand.

"Tell a fairy to come and make it," she said.

"If we only had one here!" her grandmother cried.

We protested: "Not *here.* The fairy work is all done: lawn, flowers, house—perfect!"

Mrs. Burnett confided: "What I want a fairy to do for me is to give me money; quantities and quantities of money that I haven't earned and in no way deserve!"

"But for what?"

"Gardens! Gardens and more gardens. Gardens in terraces as far as you could see—gardens flowing into each other."

"And then?"

"Then, if there was any money left over, I would pick out some young couple who were having a hard time finding an apartment—everybody is talking about big rents—and I would give them a little home in the suburbs, all furnished."

"But food! Food is so high."

"Oh, if they just *had* to starve, they could do it so decently with a roof over their heads." And she left it at that. Just like a fairy herself!

We clutched our practical head: fairy gardens flowing into each other, houses given away, and ten thousand dollar tales for the exclusive hearing of the gardener's son!

After dinner, over cigarettes, Mrs. Burnett told us the story of her Bermuda garden.

"The sun and the sky wanted a garden," she said, "and the air. They were all ready for flowers, for color, for fragrance, and so I said: 'I will have flowers.' They told me I could not, and they gave me a sharp stick and I punched and learned an awful truth. Mother earth was skin and bones. There was only coral, like rock, and over it a scant little layer of soil—no bed for flowers to sleep in. Then I knew I *must* have flowers. I made them blast the coral away—the work of millions of polyps—puff!—and I had them bring soil and I had my flowers!"

"All this talk of fairies," we said, "when you beat them at their own game!"

Then we got an invitation to go to Bermuda to see and to smell and we are going to accept it and sail away when we have a lot of money we "haven't earned and in no way deserve".

We disagreed so thoroughly with Mr. Sandburg on the July poems, that we almost hesitate to give our own choice at all, relying so completely on his judgment, of course. However, here they are, and we like Stirling Bowen's "Cartoons of the French Revolution" in "The Measure" the best of the lot. Others are: "The Outcast" by Josephine Pinckney in "Poetry", "The Holy Women" by William Alexander Percy in "Contemporary Verse", "Blackbird" by Bernard Raymond in "The Measure" and

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"South" by Elinor Wylie in "The New Republic".

Joseph Anthony is a dark-haired, dark-eyed young New Yorker, who published his first novel "Rekindled Fires" at twenty, and now, three years later, is to see his second, "The Gang", in print. Anthony was about to sail for England, where he will represent an American publisher, when we met him. He is a quiet, slow-speaking individual, who works long and hard on his novels, and takes them more seriously than do some of the younger novelists. He understands his New York, and its street life. He was brought up in it. No one has ever captured the lore of the kid's gang before, and, if Anthony writes as well as he talks, it has been done now. There are the countless little ceremonies that attend the rites peculiar to the New York gamin, the codes and the morals, the legends and the heroes. We have never forgotten a day spent with Rowland Sheldon at his camp for the "Little Brothers", when gathered around us watching a baseball game were six youngsters of ages varying from twelve to fourteen. No one of them, but had been in the hands of the law. Gradually their shyness dropped and they talked, cruelly, bitingly, of the city streets. Hard little heads these were, given to analysis beyond their years. The boundaries of their land of romance were the rivers that bind Manhattan. Rowland Sheldon, too, is writing a story of them; but his will be from a different angle, none the less interesting. Anthony's book sounds fascinating. He is already working on another, which will show the psychological effect of the setting down in America of a group of Rumanian colonists with their old-world color and legendry.

As usual, the piece of news that Earl Fisk sends is a choice one. By the way, a friend of ours was traveling recently on a train with THE BOOKMAN. We mean that he had a copy of THE BOOKMAN with him, and whom should he see but Jack Dempsey; so he promptly made the gentleman's acquaintance by giving him the number. That is not so foolish as it at first sounds, because Heywood Broun's article on Jack's own literary attainments was included. Our friend then asked Jack if he was, by nature, aggressive. "No", replied the pugilist thoughtfully, "I never had a fight in my life!" Which, after all, was an admission. So much for the growing popularity of our magazine. Says Mr. Fiske:

> Shortly before the Carpentier-Dempsey fight I sent a clipping of an interview with Dempsey on Shaw's "Cashel Byron's Profession" to Mr. Shaw. Dempsey only read about ten pages of the book and gave it up. It was too much for him. Said he didn't care for it at all. I received a reply from Mr. Shaw today and he said in part as follows referring to Dempsey:
>
> "I am afraid that Dempsey will regard me as a monster of ingratitude; but really his best friends are not those who ridiculously belittled Carpentier, but those who put up his stocks to the utmost. A man who can stop Georges' right with his jaw and not notice it must have quite the solidest head in the ring."

FAREWELL!

(After Austin Dobson's "Farewell, Renown!")

Farewell, quaint muse! Each dainty flower
That fills an elfin lady's bower
  Shall Dobson's slender tomes entwine
  While shepherds drink in native wine
A sad health to thy passing hour.

Thine was no pen of pomp or power
To span the moat or top the tower,
  That found a petticoat divine—
    Farewell, quaint muse!

Farewell!—and when free verses shower
And poets find life drab and dour,
  We'll seek again the rippling line,
  The magic measures that were thine,
Seek thee—when modern wines prove sour—
    Farewell, quaint muse!

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